

City of Novato

901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project

Environmental Impact Report (focused)

SCH #2007062020

April 2008

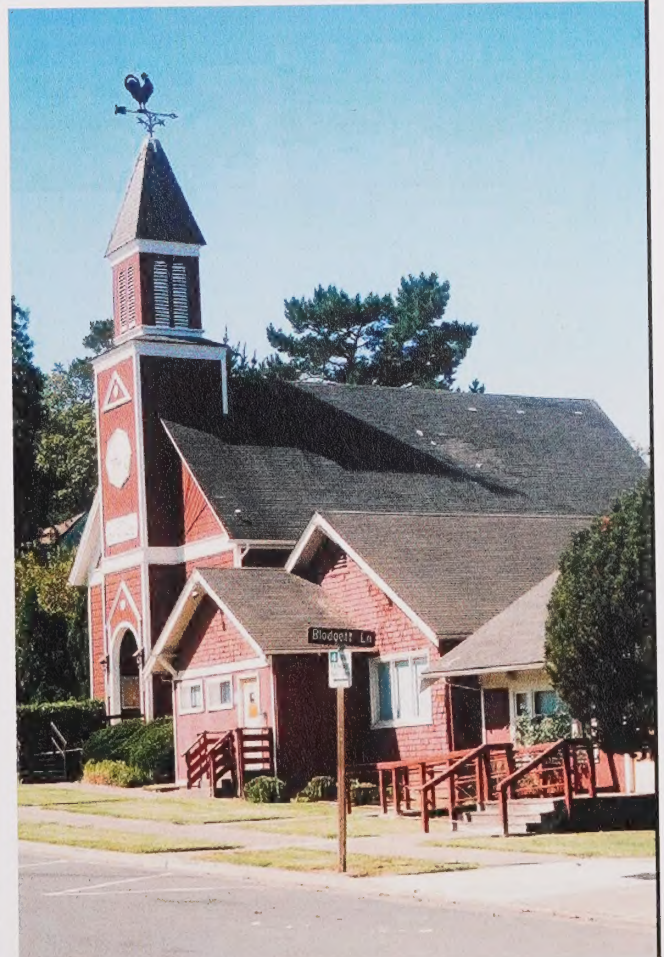
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901 Sherman Avenue EIR

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Introduction

PURPOSE OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)

This Environmental Impact Report (EIR) has been prepared for the proposed City of Novato 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project (the project), located at the Civic Center site fronting DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue adjacent to the City's downtown core retail district. The EIR has been prepared in conformance with the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines as amended.¹

The purpose of the EIR is to provide the City of Novato, public agencies and the public in general with detailed information about the environmental effects of implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project, to examine and include methods of mitigating any adverse environmental impacts should the project be approved for implementation by the Novato City Council, and to consider alternatives to the project as proposed.

CEQA provides that public agencies should not approve projects for construction or implementation until all feasible means available have been employed to substantially lessen any significant environmental effects of such projects. "Feasible" means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time taking into account economic, environmental, social and technological factors.²

The Final EIR will include comments on the Draft EIR and responses to those comments. The Final EIR will be considered by officials of the City of Novato, acting as Lead Agency for the project under CEQA, prior to any decisions being made on the project. Certification of the Final EIR by the City of Novato City Council as complete and adequate in conformance with CEQA does not grant any approvals for the project. The merits of the project will be considered by City officials after the EIR is certified.

EIR PROCESS

CEQA Review Required

The 901 Sherman Avenue building, as well as other structures within the Civic Center, are currently identified within the Downtown Specific Plan as Downtown Novato Historic Buildings and are within the boundaries of a Historic (H) Overlay District. The 901 Sherman Avenue building appears on the State Historic Resource Inventory as identified by a reconnaissance level survey, but has not been officially evaluated. Recent investigations indicate that the 901 Sherman Avenue building appears eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historical Resources as an individual property at the local level and possibly at the State level.³ The building maintains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance at the exterior.

CEQA considers a building a “historical resource” if it is a resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, in which case the resource is presumed to be historically or culturally significant.⁴ Public agencies must treat any such resource as significant unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant. Further a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment under CEQA, in which case environmental review under CEQA is required.

Notice of Preparation and Initial Study

Notice of Preparation

On May 31, 2007, the Novato Community Development Department issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) indicating that an EIR would be prepared for the proposed 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project. The NOP response period extended for 30 days from the time of receipt of the NOP. The NOP noted that it had been determined that the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project may have a significant effect on the environment and an EIR is required to be prepared for the project.

The NOP was sent to responsible and trustee county and state agencies having jurisdiction or interest over environmental resources and/or conditions in the project area (e.g., California Office of Historic Preservation; California Department of Transportation; and the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse for EIRs). The purpose of the Notice was to allow responsible and trustee agencies to transmit their concerns and comments on the scope and content of the EIR, focusing on specific information related to each agency’s statutory responsibility early in the environmental review process.

In response to the NOP, letters of comment were received from the following:

State Agencies

Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

Local Agencies/Utilities

North Marin Water District

Initial Study of Environmental Impact

In addition to the NOP discussed above, an Initial Study of Environmental Impact was prepared for the project. The purpose of an Initial Study is to determine if a project that is not exempt from CEQA may have a significant effect on the environment. All phases of project planning, implementation, and operation are to be considered in an Initial Study of a project. If it is determined that there is

substantial evidence that any aspect of the project may cause a significant effect on the environment, the Lead Agency (in this case, the City of Novato), is to prepare an EIR under CEQA.

Because an EIR had been determined to be required for the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project, the Initial Study was conducted to determine those technical subject areas that would specifically need to be addressed in the EIR. This is called EIR “focusing”. For example, if it can be clearly documented in the Initial Study that there would be no significant impact in a specific area of investigation (i.e., biological resources, land use), then such areas of investigation would not need to be analyzed in the EIR.

On the other hand, where it is shown specific issues with respect to implementing a proposed project could lead to significant impacts or potentially involve significant impacts, then those issues would need to be addressed in the EIR prepared for the project. Focusing is helpful to agencies in identifying the range of actions, alternatives, mitigation measures, and significant effects to be analyzed in depth in an EIR and in eliminating from detailed study, issues found not to be important.

The Initial Study identified potentially significant impacts that could result from implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project. These potential impacts were identified under the subject areas of Cultural Resources, Land Use and Planning, and Aesthetics. Issues of air quality, utilities and service systems, population and housing, noise, hazardous materials, geology and soils, agricultural resources, hydrology and water quality, mineral resources, biological resources, public services, transportation and traffic, and recreation were determined to not lead to significant impacts on the environment with project implementation, and therefore those issues are not discussed further in this EIR. This is consistent with CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(c)(3) wherein the Initial Study is to assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required, by identifying the effects determined not to be significant and focusing the EIR on the effects determined to be significant. Thus, this EIR is termed a “focused” EIR. It is important to note this (focused) EIR addresses only those subject areas and impact issues (impact criteria) determined in the Initial Study to be addressed in the EIR. The Initial Study is included as Appendix A in this EIR and includes an analysis of those subject areas determined to not be significant.

STANDARD FOR ADEQUACY

Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines specifies:⁵ “An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among the experts. The courts have looked not for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.”

EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT

In accordance with Sections 15143 and 15145 of the CEQA Guidelines, this EIR focuses on the significant effects on the environment resulting from implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project. Each major topic (e.g., Cultural Resources, Aesthetics) addressed in this EIR provides criteria for evaluating whether an environmental impact is significant or less than significant. The criteria presented in this EIR are derived from CEQA Guidelines Appendix G, Environmental Checklist Form, and City of Novato Environmental Review Guidelines⁶ to establish thresholds of impact significance. As explained in Section 15002(g) of the CEQA Guidelines, a significant effect on the environment is defined as a substantial adverse change in the physical conditions which exist in the area affected by the proposed project.

For each significant or potentially significant environmental impact identified, the EIR discusses mitigation measures that would be necessary to avoid or substantially reduce the impact. Determining that a mitigation measure reduces a significant impact to a less than significant level rests with understanding the criteria for determining a significant impact. If the criterion for determining a significant impact is not met, the impact is considered less than significant. For one or more significant unavoidable impacts that cannot be substantially mitigated, the Lead Agency (in this case the City of Novato), under CEQA must prepare a Statement of Overriding Considerations in which the Lead Agency sets forth its views in writing on the ultimate balancing of the merits of approving a project despite the environmental impacts which would result from project implementation. This process requires consideration of the decision maker (the Lead Agency) to balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks in determining whether to approve a project. The Statement is preserved in the record of project approval (if a project is approved) and is prepared after the Final EIR has been completed. The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project as defined further in this EIR is treated as a single undertaking to establish the potential environmental impacts under full project implementation.

CUMULATIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Cumulative impacts are discussed at the end of each technical section of this EIR. “Cumulative impact” refers to two or more individual effects, which when considered together are considerable, or which compound or increase the environmental impact under consideration. A project may have possible environmental effects which are individually limited but cumulatively considerable. “Cumulatively considerable” means that the incremental effects of an individual project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, other current projects and reasonably foreseeable probable future projects. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant projects taking place over a period of time.

Further, as noted in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130 (a), “Where a lead agency is examining a project with an incremental effect that is not ‘cumulatively considerable’, a lead agency need not consider that

effect as significant, but shall briefly describe its basis for concluding that the incremental effect is not cumulatively considerable.”

Generally, the cumulative impact analysis is based on the projected future level of growth in Novato as described in the Novato General Plan. Consideration is also given to approved or pending projects in close proximity to the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project site. Further clarifications regarding the discussion of cumulative impacts are provided in the respective sections of this EIR.

ALTERNATIVES

In addition to identifying significant project-specific and cumulative impacts and mitigation measures for those impacts, the EIR discusses a range of reasonable alternatives to the proposed project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project, but avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL EFFECTS

Section 15131 of the CEQA Guidelines specify that economic or social effects of a project shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment. However, “an EIR may trace a chain of cause and effect from a proposed decision on a project through anticipated economic or social changes resulting from the project to physical changes caused in turn by the economic or social changes. The intermediate economic or social changes need not be analyzed in any detail greater than necessary to trace the chain of cause and effect. The focus of the analysis shall be on the physical changes.”⁷ Accordingly, this EIR focuses on physical changes to the environment that would be caused through implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project.

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA Guidelines) also requires public agencies to adopt mitigation monitoring and reporting programs for changes to a project to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment.⁸ The monitoring and reporting program need not be a component of the EIR. The program is part of the project approval process, not necessarily part of the impact analysis process. A mitigation monitoring and reporting program will be included with the City of Novato findings for the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project.

CITY ACTION ON THE PROJECT

The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project will require several discretionary acts by the Novato City Council. After the required 45 day public/agency review and comment period on the Draft EIR closes, the City will respond to issues raised by the comments. The comments and responses will be published in the Final EIR prior to certification by the City Council. The Planning Commission will make

recommendations in regard to the project's consistency with the General Plan, and will require the approval of the City Council.

Endnotes — Introduction

- ¹ CEQA, *California Environmental Quality Act, Statutes and Guidelines*, Guidelines as amended January 1, 2007, published by the Governor's Office of Planning Research.
- ² Public Resources code 21061.1.
- ³ City of Novato, *Historic Resources Evaluation, 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue*, Interactive Resources, Architects & Engineers, April 27, 2007, page 16.
- ⁴ CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a)(2).
- ⁵ CEQA Guidelines Section 15151.
- ⁶ City of Novato, *Environmental Review Guidelines*, Revised April, 2000. Guidelines prepared by the Novato Planning Division and adopted by the Novato City council to implement the California Environmental Quality Act.
- ⁷ CEQA Guidelines Section 15131.
- ⁸ CEQA Guidelines Section 15097.

Section 1

Summary

1.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

Project Origination

The proposed project consists of renovating the former Novato Community Development Department building located 901 Sherman Avenue within the City's Civic Center in downtown Novato.

The one acre Civic Center site is included within the boundaries of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Area, the Downtown Novato Specific Plan Area and the Historic (H) Overlay District. The Civic Center contains eight, mostly single-story wood frame buildings and parking space for approximately 64 vehicles. All Civic Center buildings have, until 2005, been used to house City administrative offices and functions. All of the buildings at the Civic Center were originally built for functions that are different than the City administrative uses and activities previously housed within the structures.

In December 2004, City of Novato officials decided to close the City's downtown Civic Center complex after determining many of the buildings occupied by staff and made available for public use were no longer fit for daily occupancy. Consequently, most City governmental offices were moved to a complex of offices located at 75 Rowland Way, approximately one mile southeast of the Civic Center site.

In March 2007, the Novato City Council directed staff to initiate project planning, design, and environmental review for the proposed renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue. The objectives of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project are to:

- Renovate the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue; and
- Provide a public plaza and Civic Green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue.

Project Description

The proposed project principally affects three structures:

- **901 Sherman Avenue:** The building at 901 Sherman Avenue was built in 1896 as a Presbyterian church. A Sunday school structure was added to the south side of the building in 1934. Both structures, containing about 2,100 sq. ft., of floor area have been used as a portion of the overall City Hall campus with Community Development Department offices housed in the Sunday school addition and other City offices and the "front desk" housed in the former church structure. In 1950, an Annex was constructed just west of 901 Sherman Avenue (see

Figure 1-1). An irregularly-shaped connecting structure was also constructed to connect the two buildings. The Annex included support facilities for the church and classrooms, and later was used for City offices and storage space.

- **905 Sherman Avenue:** Immediately to the north of 901 Sherman Avenue is the manse (APN 153-062-10), constructed in 1918 as a residence for the pastor. The manse was eventually converted for use as the City of Novato Police Station and later the City Finance Department.
- **911 Sherman Avenue:** Immediately to the north of 905 Sherman Avenue, the Morrison House, (APN 153-062-09) was constructed as a residence in about 1916. The City used the house as the Police Station annex which was physically connected to the Police Station at 905 Sherman Avenue. The Morrison House was eventually converted to the offices of the Novato Code Enforcement Division.

Five additional structures are located at the Civic Center (see Figure 1-1 for diagrammatic illustration):

- **900 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 900 Sherman Avenue, also known as the Simmons House, has been used as the office of the City Manager and Central Administration.
- **908 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 908 Sherman Avenue, also known as the Hanen House, has been used as the office of the Youth Services Bureau.
- **917 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 917 Sherman Avenue structure has been used as the office of the Novato Parks and Recreation Department.
- **Police Department:** The Novato Police Department, constructed in 1978, is a modern public safety building providing office space, training facilities, and vehicle and equipment storage for sworn police officers, emergency dispatchers, and administrative staff.
- **Community House:** The Community House at 908 Machin Avenue is a two-story public assembly building constructed in 1926 and was previously used for recreation, theatrical presentations, meetings and related public/civic activities. The structure also housed the City Council Chambers.

In accordance with the objectives noted above, the proposed project would involve the following:

Lifting and moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building ten (10) to twelve (12) feet north of its current position and renovating the structure.

Lifting the 901 Sherman Avenue building off its foundation and moving the structure up to 12 feet north of its current location is proposed to provide a greater setback from vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue. The existing on-street parking along the north side of DeLong Avenue between Sherman Avenue and Machin Avenue would be replaced with a second westbound travel lane as part of the Whole Foods mixed-use project being constructed on the west side of Railroad Avenue, east of the Civic Center.

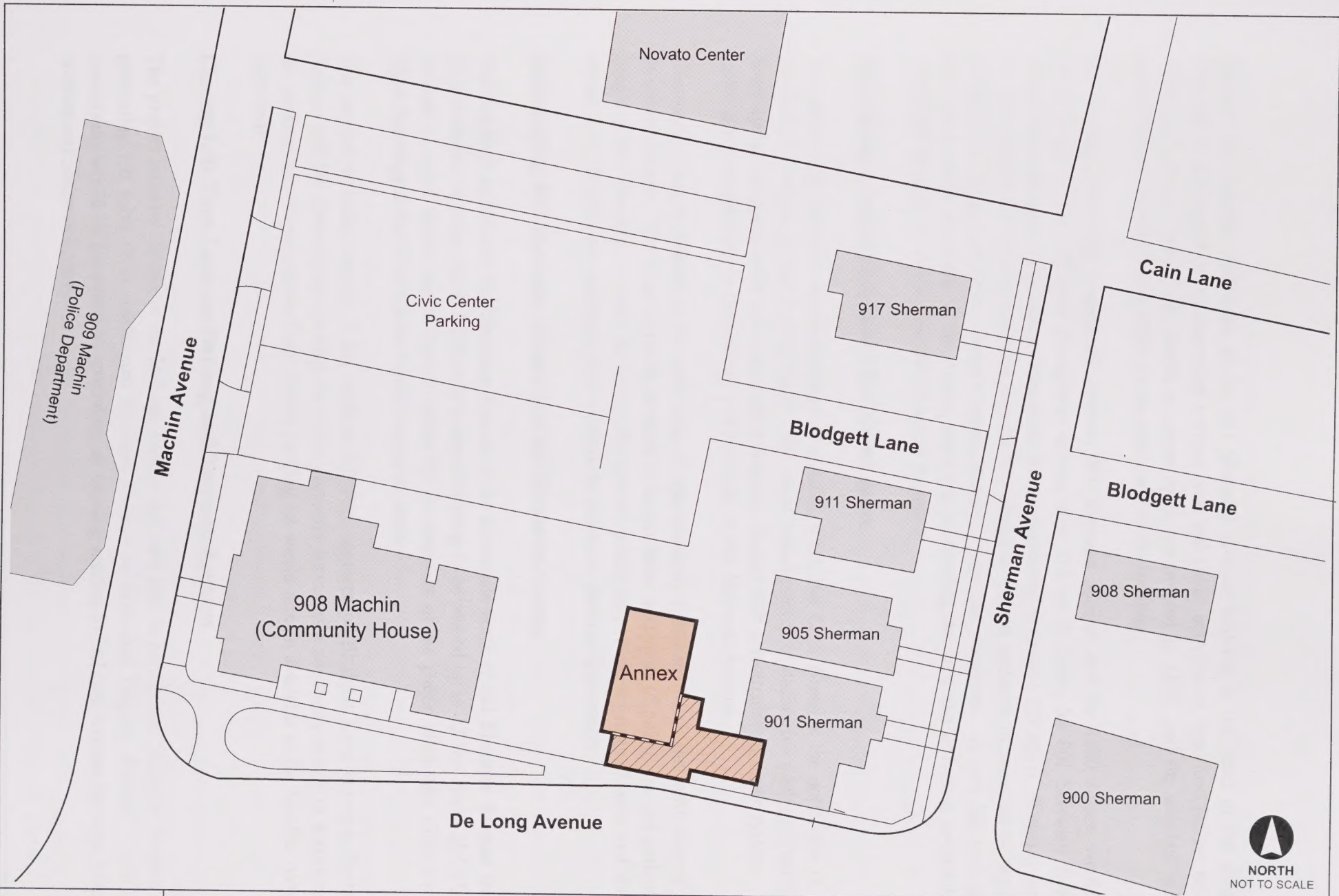


FIGURE 1-1
Sherman Avenue Buildings

Source: PBS&J, 2007.

Interior and exterior renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building is the heart of the project. Renovation is proposed to accommodate various civic and public activities as described further below. Renovation would include the church structure itself, constructed in 1896, and the attached school room addition, constructed in 1934, on the south side of the building.

An existing connecting passageway between 901 Sherman Avenue and the 1950 Annex would be removed and a new, enlarged passageway serving as a 478 sq. ft. lobby for 901 Sherman Avenue would be constructed. The east portion of the Annex consisting of about 1,527 sq. ft. of space, would be reconfigured and used as a service area for 901 Sherman Avenue inclusive of materials storage, an audio/visual equipment room, caterer's room, janitor's room and restrooms. A new hip roof at an 8:12 pitch would be added to the Annex, replacing an existing flat roof and providing architectural continuity between the Annex and 901 Sherman Avenue.

Developing a Public Plaza and Civic Green space.

The project also includes the development of a public plaza and *Civic Green* at the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue in its relocated position. The plaza would consist of decorative paving, ornamental landscaping, retaining walls and a decorative fountain feature with a recirculating water system. The public plaza would serve as the primary point of entry to 901 Sherman Avenue.

The *Civic Green* is planned to be a turf area of approximately 6,300 sq. ft. on the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue. The *Civic Green* is intended to be available in support of public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue, as well as for general public use. New ornamental trees and shrubs would be included in the landscape plan to create an attractive gateway appearance.

Demolishing 905 Sherman Avenue and 911 Sherman Avenue.

The buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to the immediate north of 901 Sherman Avenue would be demolished to allow the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved up to 12 feet north of DeLong Avenue as noted above, and to provide room for development of the public plaza and *Civic Green*. Other buildings at the Civic Center would remain in place.

The project includes closure of the western 120-foot segment of Blodgett Lane between Sherman Avenue and the Civic Center parking lot which currently serves as a secondary access to a portion of the parking lot. Access to the Civic Center parking lot would remain available at the Machin Avenue entry/exit.

Closing Left Turn Lanes on DeLong and Sherman Avenues

The project includes closure of the DeLong Avenue left turn lane to northbound Sherman Avenue and preventing left turns from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. Left turn movements would be prevented by extending an existing median in DeLong Avenue between Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue.

Modifying the Sherman Avenue Sidewalk.

The project includes adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out would match an existing bulb-out at the northeast corner of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue.

Project Operations

The 901 Sherman Avenue building would be available for use by the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Commission and other City boards and commissions regularly Monday through Thursday evenings approximately 20 percent of the available time. The building would also be available for use during the afternoons, Friday nights and weekends for programs directly serving the community, many of which would be programs sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The programs, activities and events sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department would include arts and cultural programs featuring readings, dance and musical recitals, film presentations, talent shows and similar functions; classes and enrichment programs for children and adults consisting of children's/adult theater, singing, family health and wellness programs, education and related activities; meetings, workshops and seminars; and community gatherings and special events (indoor and outdoor) featuring local history events and arts and crafts shows.

The building would also be available for rentals and private events involving small weddings and receptions, private parties, family reunions, corporate events and similar activities.

Project Demolition/Construction

The following project details regarding demolition and construction activities are summarized:

- *Demolition:* Demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would occur over about a three day period and include use of a track mounted tractor with an articulating bucket loading debris into a ten wheel dump truck. Waste materials would be subject to the City's Recycling and Reuse Ordinance (Novato Municipal Code Section 4-12). After demolition, moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building would take about one week following completion of a new foundation, and require the use of hydraulic jacks and a tractor to pull the building to the new foundation.
- *Dust Control:* During demolition, dust (particulate) emissions will be controlled through implementing measures as promulgated by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District; including watering all active construction areas at least twice daily; covering trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials; and sweeping daily (with water sweepers) paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at the construction site.
- *Noise:* Specific noise reduction measures to control noise emissions in the project area potentially affecting sensitive receptors will be implemented, including limiting truck traffic coming to and from the site for any purpose, warming-up or servicing of equipment,

demolition, and any preparation for construction to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; limiting grading activities and equipment operations to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., when City inspectors are available; and providing mufflers in good condition on all equipment driven by internal combustion engines. The construction contractor will also be required by contract to designate a “noise disturbance coordinator” who will be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise.

- *Building Noise Measures:* The City commissioned an acoustical analysis report prepared by Rosen, Goldberg, Der and Lewitz (2007) to assist in the design and development of the project. The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project has been designed to incorporate the noise control measures recommended in the report including:
 - Adding 3.5 inch thick batt insulation in the stud cavities of the exterior wall.
 - Replacing (or upgrade) 901 Sherman Avenue windows facing DeLong Avenue to provide minimum sound transmission class (STC) rating of 38.
 - Including an air conditioning or ventilation system to provide a habitable interior environment when the windows are closed for noise control.
- *Hazardous Materials:* Prior to demolition or renovation activities, identified potential mercury-containing thermostats/switches, lights, ballasts and air conditioning units will be removed and recycled or disposed of by a licensed contractor according to all applicable federal, state and local regulations. Specific procedures for removal, handling, transport and disposal to avoid the release of hazardous materials will be included in contracts for all building renovation and demolition activities, both prior to and during the work. Asbestos removal work requirements are to be included in a work plan/specification developed by a California Certified Asbestos Contractor. The process for safe asbestos removal will, at a minimum, include the following steps:
 - Identification and demarcation of all asbestos containing building materials (ACMs)
 - Hand removal of ACMs by workers wearing clean suits and protective breathers
 - Watering of all debris piles such that fugitive dust is not released
 - Placement of debris in an on-site containment area such that water is filtered prior to entering the storm drainage system
 - Disposal of ACMs at a Class I landfill.
- *Geotechnical/Drainage:* Support for perimeter foundations and retaining walls is to be achieved through the use of drilled, cast-in-place, reinforced concrete piers interconnected with grade beams. New interior floors will consist of structural slabs or joist-supported wood designed to span between pier or pile foundations supported in bedrock.

1.2 GENERAL PLAN MAP DESIGNATION AND ZONING

General Plan Map

The project site is located within the Community Facilities (CF) designation as shown on the Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1. CF designated land uses include public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, City offices, and other civic and utility uses as well as privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses. The 901 Sherman Avenue project would be consistent with the CF General Plan land use designation as there would be a return of civic use to the 901 Sherman Avenue building as a result of the project.

Project Site Zoning

The project site is located within the Community Facilities Zoning District (CF), which is applied to areas suitable for public land uses including government offices, meeting halls, schools and libraries, and other related municipal uses. The CF Zoning District is intended to be consistent with the community facilities, public utilities, and civic uses land use designations of the General Plan.

The project site is also located within two Overlay Zoning Districts, as indicated on the Zoning Map, where special provisions apply. The Downtown Novato Specific Plan (D) Overlay District is applied to areas covered by the Downtown Novato Specific Plan to provide standards for development and new land uses that recognize, protect and enhance the desired character of the downtown area. The Historic (H) Overlay District is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the Community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, architectural heritage, identity and character. Overlay Districts provide guidance for development in addition to the standards and regulations of the primary zoning districts, where important site, environmental, safety, compatibility or design issues require particular attention in project planning. The Historic (H) Overlay District is a zoning instrument specifying the permit requirements, development standards, and procedures for new development, alterations, and demolition activities involving parcels and structures lying within the District boundaries. The Historic (H) Overlay District does not prohibit the alteration and/or demolition of structures lying within the District.

1.3 AREAS OF CONTROVERSY, ISSUES TO BE RESOLVED

As noted in the *Introduction* section of this EIR, the purpose of the EIR is to provide the City of Novato, public agencies and the public in general with detailed information regarding the potential environmental effects of implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project, to examine and institute methods of mitigating any adverse environmental impacts should the project be approved for construction, and to consider alternatives to the project as proposed.

A Notice of EIR Preparation was issued by the City of Novato Planning Department on May 31, 2007. In addition, an Initial Study of Environmental Impact (Environmental Checklist Form), was completed

(Appendix A of this EIR). The Initial Study identified potentially significant impacts that could result from implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project. These potential impacts included the subject areas *Cultural Resources*, *Land Use and Planning*, and *Aesthetics*. Issues of air quality, utilities and service systems, population and housing, noise, hazardous materials, geology and soils, agricultural resources, hydrology and water quality, mineral resources, biological resources, public services, transportation and traffic, and recreation were determined to not lead to significant impacts on the environment, and therefore those issues are not discussed further in this EIR.

There are significant unavoidable environmental impacts that would occur from implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project as proposed. These impacts are the result of the proposed demolition of two buildings that are considered historical resources under CEQA, wherein the resources would be materially impaired through demolition of the physical characteristics that convey their historical significance and justify their inclusion in the Historic (H) Overlay District. In addition, it was determined that demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would disrupt the existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue, which is considered a significant and unavoidable aesthetic impact.

Other adverse environmental impacts as described in this EIR can be mitigated to less than significant levels. Accordingly, from the standpoint of environmental review, the major issue to be resolved includes an examination of project alternatives that reduce the significant and unavoidable impacts to the extent practicable. This EIR presents eight alternatives for the project, inclusive of No Project, five alternative schemes that examine solutions that consider avoiding or lessening the significant environmental effects of the project and the Environmentally Superior alternative. This is done to ensure that a range of options is examined, thus providing an understanding of the effects of full project implementation, partial project implementation, or no project. This EIR serves to provide information so that decision makers, responsible agencies and the public are fully informed of the environmental consequences of these decisions.

1.4 MAJOR EIR CONCLUSIONS

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

The following presents the major conclusions and findings of the EIR. Table 1-1 summarizes the environmental impacts and mitigation measures as contained in the body of the EIR. The description of the potentially significant and significant unavoidable impacts and mitigation measures in Table 1-1 has been abbreviated consistent with the format of a summary section, and the reader is referred to the main EIR text for a complete discussion of environmental impacts and mitigation measures (refer to the numbering sequence for location). A summary of each alternative to the proposed 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project as addressed in this EIR is also provided below.

Alternatives

The purpose of the discussion of alternatives in an EIR is to focus on project solutions which may be capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant environmental effects of a project, even if those alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly.

TABLE 1-1
901 SHERMAN AVENUE RENOVATION PROJECT
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts	Impact Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact Significance With Mitigation
3.1 Cultural Resources			
Historical Resource Significance: <i>Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5? (Impact Criterion #1).</i>			
<u>Impact 3.1-1</u>		<u>Mitigation Measure 3.1-1</u>	
The proposed project could cause a substantial change in the significance of 901 Sherman Avenue as an historical resource. This would be a significant impact. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”	(S)	The proposed exterior renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue, shall be completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the existing massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. An architectural historian shall be hired by the City to monitor and direct the renovation process to ensure that all renovation activities are conducted in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards and the historic values of 901 Sherman Avenue are retained. In addition, the City shall install a minimum of two interpretive displays at 901 Sherman Avenue that will provide information to visitors regarding the history of the property. At least one display shall be located outside of the building. All other displays may be located inside the building provided they will be accessible to the public. Displays shall be lighted, installed at pedestrian-friendly locations and be of adequate size to attract the interested pedestrian. Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 would reduce Impact 3.1-1 to a less-than-significant level by requiring use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in the renovation of the building. These actions would preserve the significance of 901 Sherman Avenue as an historical resource.	(LS)

Legend:	(S)	Significant Adverse Impact	(SU)	Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impact	(PS)	Potentially Significant Adverse Impact	(LS)	Less than Significant Adverse Impact
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TABLE 1-1 (Continued)
901 SHERMAN AVENUE RENOVATION PROJECT
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts	Impact Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact Significance With Mitigation
<u>Impact 3.1-2</u> Demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource. This would be a significant and unavoidable adverse impact.	(SU)	<u>Mitigation Measure 3.1-2</u> The historic record and contribution of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to the historical profile of downtown Novato shall be preserved by requiring 1) documentation of the buildings, and 2) dissemination of the documentation. Documentation shall be based on the National Park Service Historic American Building Survey/Historic American Engineering Record Historical Report Guidelines. Documentation distribution shall include the California Historical Resources Information System at Sonoma State University, the California State Library in Sacramento, and the Novato History Museum. These measures would reduce impact 3.1-2. However, because demolition would permanently remove the historical resources, thus materially impairing the physical characteristics that convey their listing as historic structures in the Historic (H) Overlay District and Downtown Specific Plan, Impact 3.1-2 would remain significant and unavoidable.	(SU)
Archaeological Resource Significance: <i>Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5? (Impact Criterion #2)</i>			
<u>Impact 3.1-3</u> Due to the prehistoric and historic uses of the region, there is a possibility that subsurface unique archaeological and historic subsurface resources exist on the project site that could be uncovered during grading and excavation associated with building demolition and renovation. If encountered, such resources could be damaged or destroyed resulting in a potentially significant adverse impact.	(PS)	<u>Mitigation Measure 3.1-3</u> All construction-related earth-moving activities shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist, with experience in subsurface historic resources. If evidence of an archaeological or historic site or other suspected cultural resource as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, including darkened soil representing past human activity ("midden"), that could conceal material remains (e.g., worked stone, worked bone, fired clay vessels, faunal bone, hearths, or storage pits) are discovered, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 feet of the resources shall be halted and City of Novato notified. The monitoring archaeologist shall conduct a field investigation. The City of Novato shall consult with the archeologist to assess the significance of the find. Impacts to any significant resources	(LS)
Legend:	(S) Significant Adverse Impact	(SU) Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impact	(PS) Potentially Significant Adverse Impact
			(LS) Less than Significant Adverse Impact

TABLE 1-1 (Continued)
901 SHERMAN AVENUE RENOVATION PROJECT
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts		Impact Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact Significance With Mitigation
			shall be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through data recovery or other methods determined adequate by the qualified archaeologist. All data recovery or other methods shall be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeological Documentation. Any identified resources shall be recorded on the appropriate DPR 523 (A-J) form and filed with the CCIC.	
Paleontological Resources: <i>Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (Impact Criterion #3).</i>				
<u>Impact 3.1-4</u> Grading and excavation activities necessary for the project could have the potential to unearth any undiscovered paleontological resources. If such resources were discovered they could be damaged or destroyed resulting in their loss which would be a potentially significant adverse impact.		(PS)	<u>Mitigation Measure 3.1-4</u> In the event fossilized or unfossilized shell or bone is uncovered during excavation and renovation activities, the contractor shall stop work in the immediate area of the find, notify the City, and the City shall retain a qualified paleontologist to survey the site and assess the find. The paleontologist shall prescribe treatment of the find that shall be forwarded to the Director of Community Development. Treatment shall at a minimum include collection, recordation, and analysis of any significant cultural material. If a fossil find is confirmed, it shall be recorded with the U.S. Geological Survey and curated in an appropriate repository.	(LS)
Human Remains: <i>Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (Impact Criterion #4).</i>				
<u>Impact 3.1-5</u> Grading for the project could disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. This would be a potentially significant impact.		(PS)	<u>Mitigation Measure 3.1-5</u> If human remains (including disarticulated or cremated human remains) are discovered during any phase of project renovation, all ground-disturbing activity shall be halted and the City of Novato and the County coroner shall be notified immediately, according to Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 7050.5 of California's Health and Safety Code. If the remains are determined by the County coroner to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be notified within 24 hours, and the guidelines of the NAHC	(LS)
Legend:	(S) Significant Adverse Impact	(SU) Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impact	(PS) Potentially Significant Adverse Impact	(LS) Less than Significant Adverse Impact

TABLE 1-1 (Continued)
901 SHERMAN AVENUE RENOVATION PROJECT
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts	Impact Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact Significance With Mitigation
shall be adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains. The City of Novato shall also retain a professional archaeologist with Native American burial experience to conduct a field investigation of the specific site and consult with the Most Likely Descendant, if any, identified by the NAHC. As necessary, the archaeologist may provide professional assistance to the Most Likely Descendant, including the excavation and removal of the human remains. The City of Novato shall be responsible for approval of recommended mitigation as the archaeologist deems appropriate, taking account of the provisions of State law, as set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) and Public Resources Code section 5097.98. The City of Novato shall implement approved mitigation before the resumption of ground-disturbing activities where the remains were discovered.			
<u>Impact 3.1-6</u> The proposed project, in combination with other projects in the City of Novato Historic Overlay District, could result in adverse effects to historical resources. This would be a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.	SU	<u>Mitigation Measure 3.1-6</u> There is no mitigation measure available to reduce this impact to a less than significant level. This would continue to be a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.	SU
3.3 Aesthetics Visual Character and Appearances: <i>Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? (Impact Criterion)</i>			
<u>Impact 3.3-1</u> Relocating 901 Sherman Avenue up to 12 feet north of its current location and demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would disrupt the existing visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape.	(SU)	<u>Mitigation Measure 3.3-1</u> No mitigation measure is available to reduce Impact 3.3-1 regarding alteration of the streetscape to a less than significant level.	(SU)
<u>Impact 3.3-2</u>		<u>Mitigation Measure 3.3-2</u>	
Legend:	(S) Significant Adverse Impact	(SU) Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impact	(PS) Potentially Significant Adverse Impact
		(LS) Less than Significant Adverse Impact	

TABLE 1-1 (Continued)
901 SHERMAN AVENUE RENOVATION PROJECT
SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Impacts	Impact Significance Without Mitigation	Mitigation Measures	Impact Significance With Mitigation
Project demolition, construction and renovation would require site grading, construction materials stockpiling and storage, and the use of construction equipment in varying intensity as the various phases of the project occur. As a change from current site conditions during periods of demolition and renovation, this is considered a potentially significant visual impact. This demolition and construction impact would be localized and short-term however, lasting during the period of project implementation on the project site.	(PS)	The storage of machines and equipment and stockpiling of construction materials prior to use shall be minimized to reduce visual exposure to the extent practicable. Although a construction staging area has not been designated at this time, such staging area shall be located internal to the project site and away from DeLong Avenue and as close to or within the area of demolition and construction as possible, out of the way of community traffic and pedestrian use.	(LS)

Legend:	(S) Significant Adverse Impact	(SU) Significant, Unavoidable Adverse Impact	(PS) Potentially Significant Adverse Impact	(LS) Less than Significant Adverse Impact
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Cultural resources impacts would be considered significant if implementation of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” Therefore, as noted in Table 1-1, the unavoidable and significant environmental impacts that would result from the project as proposed that cannot be reduced to less than significant levels include the loss of historical resources through demolition of the structures at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Other identified significant and/or potentially significant impacts respecting other technical subject areas as addressed in this EIR (e.g., *Cultural Resources*, *Aesthetics*) can be mitigated to less than significant levels.

The range of alternatives presented in this EIR explores alternative project development scenarios that may offer less involved, less costly or more effective means of mitigating the identified significant impacts to less than significant levels. The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project alternatives include the following:

- No Project
- 905 and 911 Relocation Within the Historic Overlay District
- 905 and 911 Relocation Outside the Historic Overlay District
- 905 Relocation Only
- 905 Demolition Only
- 901 Renovation in Place and 905 and 911 Demolition
- 901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911
- Environmentally Superior Alternative

No Project

Under the No Project alternative there would be no 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project at this time. None of the objectives of the project as stated would be realized. There would also be no demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings identified as historical resources under CEQA and consequently none of the significant unavoidable impacts regarding historical resources would occur as a result of the project. There would be no loss of historical resources through demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and there would be no disruption of the existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue through demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue.

There would be no building renovation on the project site and the public, as well as the City Council and various City Commissions, would not have the site available for use as a public venue as has historically been the case. Property owned by the City would continue to yield no specific benefit to residents and businesses as a whole. Without routine maintenance, the historic building at 901

Sherman Avenue could weather and deteriorate, adversely affecting its historical resource value. The No Project alternative would not allow City officials to focus on revitalizing renovation and revitalization of the 901 Sherman Avenue building and returning some government services and community oriented activities to downtown Novato.

905 and 911 Relocation within the Historic (H) Overlay District

In lieu of demolition, this alternative focuses on the potential relocation of 905 Sherman Avenue to a City owned parcel at 900 Sherman Avenue and relocation of 911 Sherman Avenue to an adjacent City owned parcel at 917 Sherman Avenue.

While this alternative would not require the demolition of a locally historic structure, and would minimize the loss of contributing buildings within the Historic (H) Overlay District, this alternative would significantly alter the setting of the 901, 905, 911, 917, 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue buildings and would destroy the associative link between 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Also, positioning the 900, 905 and 908 Sherman Avenue buildings as a closely spaced group would not represent land use and visual conditions as historically existed within the district. Locating 911 Sherman Avenue to the west of 917 Sherman Avenue would eliminate the building's historic street frontage orientation and exposure. This alternative could still require a Statement of Overriding Considerations under CEQA and is not considered practical from the standpoint of preserving the setting of the six buildings or the historic association the buildings as a group share. This alternative would also be more costly than the project as proposed.

905 and 911 Relocation Outside the Historic Overlay District

This alternative calls for the relocation of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to a location(s) outside of the City's Historic (H) Overlay District under the efforts of a private party. This would require the City to advertise the two buildings as available for purchase.

While this alternative would potentially retain 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue for the benefit of others, their removal from the Historic (H) Overlay District would invalidate their status as elements of the District. This alternative would also disrupt the existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue through removal of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings. The number of locally designated historic buildings within the historic district would be reduced, the association of 905 Sherman Avenue as the manse would be lost, and the context of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would be lost. Again, this would be a significant impact under CEQA requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations because CEQA considers a building a "historical resource" if it is a resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code. However, if successfully implemented, this alternative would allow for the project to move forward as planned, thus fulfilling the project objectives. Although the impact would be significant under this alternative, unlike the previous alternative, this alternative would not require demolition of the two structures and the buildings could be preserved for future use. Under this alternative, the City could assure that the

buildings would be rehabilitated to the appropriate standards by placing restrictions in a transfer agreement. If the buildings were altered beyond recognition this would also constitute a substantial adverse change to a historical resource and, therefore, a significant impact on the environment. No purchaser is known at this time.

905 Relocation Only

This alternative would relocate 905 Sherman Avenue to either between the buildings at 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue or to the west side of the building at 917 Sherman Avenue. The building at 911 Sherman Avenue would remain in its current location.

As noted previously, the project as proposed calls for demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to allow space for the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved approximately 10 to 12 feet north of DeLong Avenue, and allow for development of the public plaza and Civic Green adjacent to the relocated building. Under this alternative, only the building adjacent 901 Sherman Avenue would be relocated.

This alternative would be similar to the alternative that relocates 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue within the Historic District. Although this alternative would move one building instead of two, this alternative would nonetheless entail the same impacts as discussed under the previous alternative. Assuming this alternative was to move forward, none of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the project would be reduced to a less than significant level. The impact of materially impairing a historic resource would not be mitigated,. Likewise, the impact to the aesthetics of the existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be disrupted through building relocation. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.

905 Demolition Only

This alternative would demolish the 905 Sherman Avenue building only, leaving 911 Sherman Avenue in place. Under this alternative, the adverse impact of materially impairing a historic resource through demolition would still occur, as for the project as proposed. The existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be disrupted through building demolition.

This alternative could limit the amount of space planned for creation of a meaningfully sized plaza and Civic Green space on the north side of the 901 Sherman Avenue building which is an objective of the project. Loss of the building would still require a Statement of Overriding Considerations under CEQA. While the impact of this alternative would also be significant and unavoidable it would lessen the impact to historic resources when compared to the project as proposed because only one instead of two locally historic buildings would be demolished. A statement of Overriding considerations would be required for this alternative.

901 Renovation in Place and 905 and 911 Demolition

This alternative would demolish both 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and the building at 901 Sherman Avenue would be renovated in its current location.

Similar to the project as proposed, the removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would be a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations. The existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be disrupted through building removal. An additional drawback of this alternative has to do with eliminating the proposed building setback from DeLong Avenue. Given that the existing on-street parking along DeLong Avenue would be removed and replaced with an additional travel lane as part of the Whole Foods mixed-use project, an increased setback from DeLong Avenue would enhance pedestrian safety. Lifting 901 Sherman Avenue off its foundation and moving the structure north of its current location is proposed to provide a greater setback from vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue. Pedestrian safety would thus not be improved under this alternative. Further, loss of the setback from DeLong Avenue would maintain the current sense of minimal lot area on which the structure rests.

901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911

Under this alternative the project would be redefined to include the renovation of 901 Sherman, in place, with no changes to 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue with the public plaza and Civic Green located on the west side of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. All three buildings would remain in place. No building would be demolished.

This alternative would likely result in the removal of about six parking spaces formerly reserved for City department heads. There also could be the need to remove several parking stalls in the Civic Center parking lot to provide an appropriate turning radius for fire apparatus. Compared to the project as proposed, which calls for the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, the significant and unavoidable cultural resource impacts identified for the project would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of the mitigation measures included for the proposed project. All three resources would remain in place and the project would not materially impair a historic resource. The historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be preserved; no aesthetic impact would occur. Therefore, this alternative would have less impacts when compared to the anticipated impacts of the proposed project. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would not be required for this Alternative. A drawback of this alternative concerns the lack of a building setback from DeLong Avenue as discussed above under the *901 Renovation in Place* alternative. Additionally, this alternative would not permit the construction of a meaningfully sized plaza and civic green, which is an objective of the proposed project.

Environmentally Superior Alternative

As described previously, cultural resources impacts would be considered significant if implementation of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. CEQA Guidelines Section

15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”

The analysis in this EIR indicates there would be a significant and unavoidable adverse cultural resource impact with the demolition of 905 and/or 911 Sherman Avenue, or relocation of either or both of the buildings. The EIR analysis further indicates the visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be lost through the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, or relocation of either or both structures. In addition, the loss of contributing buildings in the Historic (H) Overlay District could result in a cumulative impact due to the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Neither of these significant and unavoidable adverse impacts would occur under the 901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911 Alternative. In view of the above, it is concluded the 901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911 Alternative is determined to be the Environmentally Superior Alternative.

1.5 PROJECT SCHEDULING

Scheduling the renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue has not been set at this time. Given that review of this document would be expected to extend into early 2008, further deliberations on the project could extend into mid 2008. Demolition, relocation, construction and renovation plans are currently being reviewed by the City. Following the acceptance and award of bids, project implementation could occur in mid-2008 or later, depending on funding and other priorities as determined.

1.6 REQUIRED APPROVALS

The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project must first be approved by the City Council for the project to move forward. Following project approvals, project construction and renovation plans and specifications would be reviewed and/or amended and approved by the City in accordance with the adopted mitigation measures as specified in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared for the project.

Project construction and renovation plans and specifications would be advertised for bid by the City Public Works Department for consideration by area contractors. Construction and renovation procedures, as provided for in the construction bid documents (drawings and specifications), would be reviewed for conformity and approval by City engineers and inspectors on a continuing basis as the work progresses. Final acceptance of the completed project by the City would be given after monitoring implementation of the required mitigation measures and final inspections for conformity of the completed project with the bid documents.

Section 2

Project Description

2.1 901 SHERMAN AVENUE RENOVATION PROJECT

Proposed Project and Location

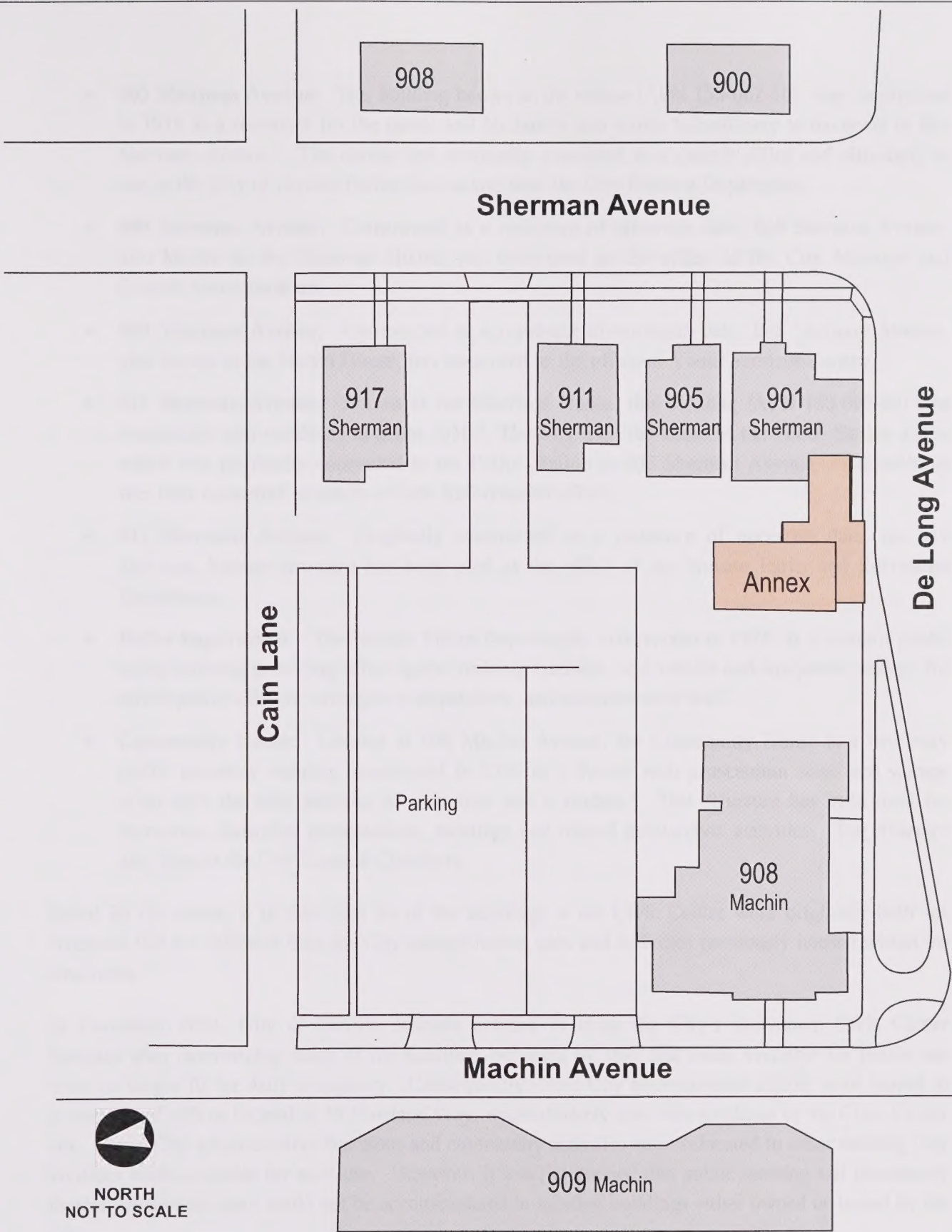
The proposed project consists of renovating the former Novato Community Development Department building located at the City's Civic Center in downtown Novato. The Civic Center is bounded on the south by DeLong Avenue which connects directly to U.S. Highway 101, on the east by Sherman Avenue, on the west by Machin Avenue and on the north by Cain Lane. Known as the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project, the project site is located in the southeast area of the Civic Center at the intersection of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue. Figure 2-1, Project Location, illustrates the location of the City of Novato in reference to the location of other jurisdictions within the north Bay Area. Figure 2-1 also illustrates the location of the Civic Center with the project site in reference to the local Novato street network. The Civic Center and project site are located immediately south of the City's Grant Avenue downtown core retail area.

Project Background, Components and Objectives

The City of Novato was incorporated in 1960. The Novato Civic Center consists of about one acre. The Civic Center is included within the boundaries of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Area, the Downtown Novato Specific Plan Area and the Novato Historic (H) Overlay District. The Civic Center contains eight wood frame buildings and parking space for approximately 64 vehicles. All Civic Center buildings have, until 2005, been used to house City administrative offices and functions, and include the following as indicated on Figure 2-2 (the buildings at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue as described below are shown on the cover of this document from left to right).

- **901 Sherman Avenue:** The building at 901 Sherman Avenue (APN 153-062-11) was built in 1896 as a Presbyterian church of the Victorian Gothic style of architecture.¹ A Sunday school structure was added to the south side of the building in 1934. Both structures have been used as a portion of the overall City Hall campus with Planning Division offices housed in the Sunday school addition and other City offices and the "front desk" housed in the former church structure. The 901 Sherman Avenue building including the Sunday school contains about 2,100 sq. ft. of interior floor area. An Annex and connecting structure were constructed in 1950, the Annex (known as Trevitt Hall when dedicated), included a social hall, kitchen, pastor's study, church office and bathrooms on the main floor and nine classrooms and storage in the basement. This structure has been used for City offices and storage space. A portion of this building is planned to be used as a service area for 901 Sherman Avenue as discussed further below under the title Project Description. The 901 Sherman Avenue building coupled with the church and the adjacent Annex building built in 1950 contains about 7,300 sq. ft. of floor area.





- **905 Sherman Avenue:** This building known as the manse (APN 153-062-10), was constructed in 1918 as a residence for the pastor and his family and stands immediately to the north of 901 Sherman Avenue.² The manse was eventually converted to a church office and ultimately to use as the City of Novato Police Station and later the City Finance Department.
- **900 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 900 Sherman Avenue, also known as the Simmons House, has been used as the office of the City Manager and Central Administration.
- **908 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 908 Sherman Avenue, also known as the Hanen House, has been used as the office of Youth Services Bureau.
- **911 Sherman Avenue:** Known as the Morrison House, this building (APN 153-062-09) was constructed as a residence in about 1916.³ The City used the house as the Police Station annex which was physically connected to the Police Station at 905 Sherman Avenue. The building was later converted to use as a Code Enforcement office.
- **917 Sherman Avenue:** Originally constructed as a residence of uncertain date, the 917 Sherman Avenue structure has been used as the office of the Novato Parks and Recreation Department.
- **Police Department.** The Novato Police Department, constructed in 1978, is a modern public safety building providing office space, training facilities, and vehicle and equipment storage for sworn police officers, emergency dispatchers, and administrative staff.
- **Community House:** Located at 908 Machin Avenue, the Community House is a two-story public assembly building constructed in 1926 as a theater with proscenium stage and storage areas with the later addition of restrooms and a kitchen.⁴ This structure has been used for recreation, theatrical presentations, meetings and related public/civic activities. The structure also housed the City Council Chambers.

Based on the above, it is clear that all of the buildings at the Civic Center were originally built for functions that are different than the City administrative uses and activities previously housed within the structures.

In December 2004, City of Novato officials decided to close the City's downtown Civic Center complex after determining many of the buildings occupied by staff and made available for public use were no longer fit for daily occupancy. Consequently, most City governmental offices were moved to a complex of offices located at 75 Rowland Way, approximately one mile southeast of the Civic Center site. Some City administrative functions and community activities were relocated to other existing City facilities made available for such use. However, it was determined that public meeting and community theater production space could not be accommodated in existing buildings either owned or leased by the City.

In March 2007, the Novato City Council directed staff to initiate project planning, design, and environmental review for the proposed renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue. The objectives of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project are to:

- Renovate the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue; and
- Provide a public plaza and Civic Green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue.

Project Description

In accordance with the objectives noted above, the proposed project would involve the following:

- Lifting and moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building ten (10) to twelve (12) feet north of its current position and renovating the structure.

Lifting the 901 Sherman Avenue building off its foundation and moving the structure north of its current location is proposed to provide a greater setback from vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue. Relocation is desired to increase space between the building and the north edge of DeLong Avenue. The existing on-street parking along the north side of DeLong Avenue between Sherman Avenue and Machin Avenue is planned to be replaced with a second westbound travel lane as a part of the Whole Foods mixed-use project being constructed on the west side of Railroad Avenue, east of the Civic Center.⁵ Without building relocation and with the planned lane reconfiguration, vehicle traffic would be within approximately six-feet of the south wall of the 901 Sherman Avenue building were it to remain in its current location.

Renovating the 901 Sherman Avenue building is the heart of the project. A comprehensive renovation of the structure is proposed to accommodate various civic and public activities as described further below. Renovation would include the church structure itself constructed in 1896 and the attached school room addition on the south side of the building constructed in 1934. Other planned improvements include a new building foundation, seismic safety enhancements, and reconstructed electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems. All new interior finishes are included in the project.

In addition to interior renovation, the project would include exterior renovation. Acoustically-rated windows are proposed to replace the original single-pane glazing found throughout the building to improve sound attenuation and energy efficiency. Window shape and trim would match the existing windows. A new roof would be installed with the surface primarily consisting of cement fiber slate shingles. The roof would also be fitted with a building integrated solar energy system on the south and southeast facing roof surfaces. The solar energy system would consist of photovoltaic shingles shaped and mounted in a manner consistent with the cement fiber slate shingles. The new roof system, including the photovoltaic shingles would not alter the pitch of the existing roof on 901 Sherman Avenue. Solar electrical equipment would be located in the attic space of 901 Sherman Avenue and

within the electrical room of the 1950 Annex. Overall, the exterior architectural appearance of the 901 Sherman Avenue building would be retained.

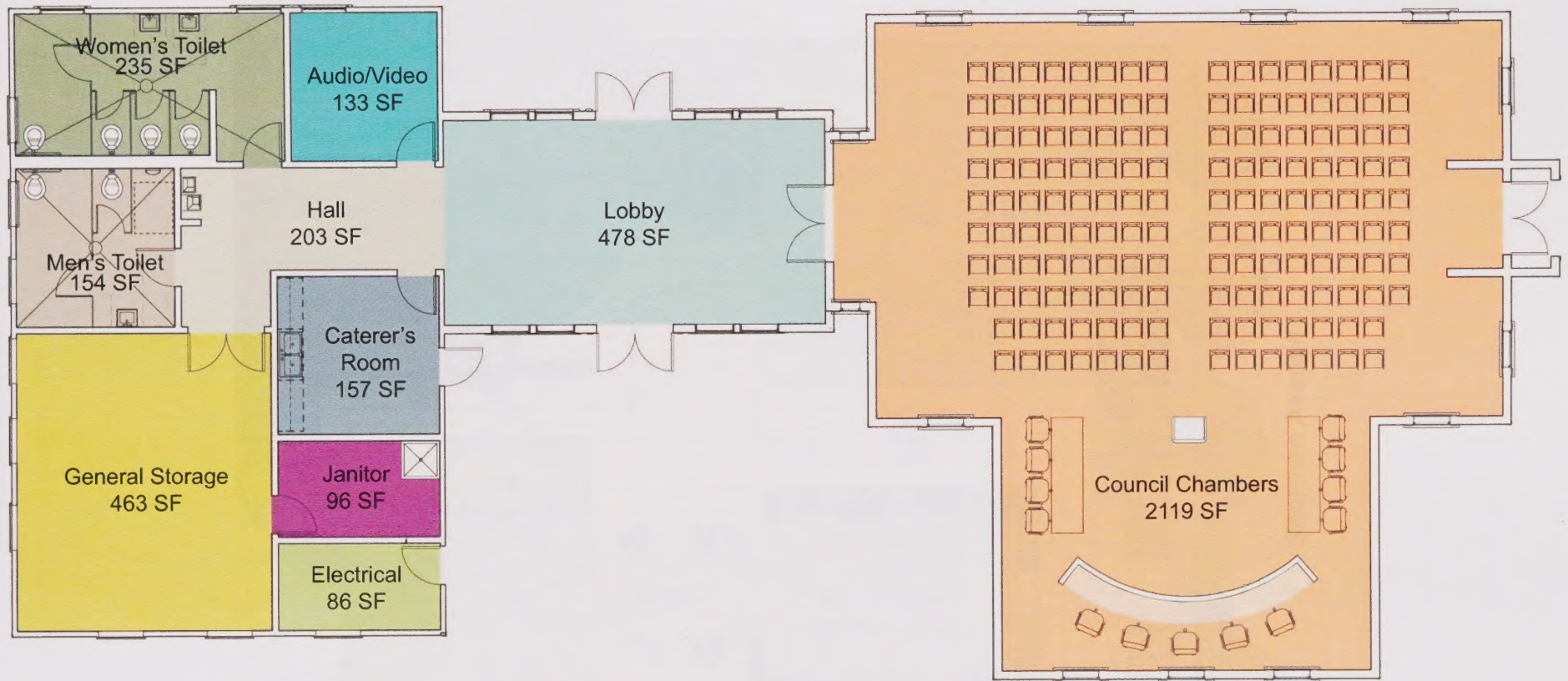
901 Sherman Avenue would be reconfigured as follows: the existing connecting passageway between the main 901 Sherman Avenue building and the 1950 Annex would be removed and a new, enlarged passageway serving as a lobby for 901 Sherman Avenue would be constructed. The lobby would have a floor area of about 478 sq. ft. The east portion of the 1950 Annex (exclusive of the connecting passageway) consisting of about 1,527 sq. ft. of space, would be reconfigured and used as a service area for 901 Sherman Avenue. The service area would include materials storage, an audio/visual equipment room, caterer's room, janitor's room and restrooms. A new hip roof at an 8:12 pitch is planned to be added to the 1950 Annex. The new hip roof would replace the existing flat roof and provide architectural continuity between the Annex and 901 Sherman Avenue. As with 901 Sherman Avenue, the roof would be fitted with a building integrated solar energy system on the south and southeast facing roof surfaces. The solar energy system would consist of photovoltaic shingles shaped and mounted in a manner consistent with the cement fiber slate shingles.

The renovated 901 Sherman Avenue structure would contain approximately 2,100 sq. ft. of floor area dedicated to public meeting/multi-use event space.⁶ Because the floor elevation of both the new Council Chambers and the Annex building would be below the elevation of DeLong Avenue, a subdrain would be installed between the Annex and DeLong Avenue to prevent water seepage problems. The Annex is planned to be lowered about three and one-half feet to match the floor elevation of 901 Sherman Avenue. A Schematic Floor Plan is shown on Figure 2-3.

- Developing a public plaza and Civic Green space.

The project includes the development of a public plaza and Civic Green at the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue in its relocated position. The plaza would consist of decorative paving, ornamental landscaping, retaining walls and public art to include a decorative water fountain feature. The public plaza would serve as the primary point of entry (including an ADA compliant ramp) to 901 Sherman Avenue.

The Civic Green is planned to be a turf area of approximately 7,000 sq. ft. on the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue.⁷ The Civic Green would include a decorative trellis feature located at the boundary between the Civic Center parking lot and Civic Green. The Civic Green is intended to be available in support of public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue as well as for general public use. New ornamental trees and shrubs would be included in the landscape plan to create an attractive gateway appearance. A Schematic Landscape Plan is shown on Figure 2-4.



NORTH
NOT TO SCALE



- Demolishing 905 Sherman Avenue and 911 Sherman Avenue.

The buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to the immediate north of 901 Sherman Avenue would be demolished to allow the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved north of DeLong Avenue as noted above, and to provide room for development of the public plaza and *Civic Green*. Other buildings at the Civic Center would not be disturbed and would remain in place.

- Closing Blodgett Lane.

The project includes closure of the western 120-foot segment of Blodgett Lane between Sherman Avenue and the Civic Center parking lot, which currently serves as a secondary access to a portion of the parking lot. Access to the Civic Center parking lot would remain available at the Machin Avenue entry/exit.

- Closing left turn lanes on DeLong and Sherman Avenues.

The project includes closure of the DeLong Avenue left turn lane to northbound Sherman Avenue. The project also includes preventing left turns from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. Left turn movements would be prevented by extending an existing median in DeLong Avenue between Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue.

The new extended median section would include a segment designed to allow emergency vehicle access from eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue. The median would also feature trees and other landscape features to enhance street appearances near 901 Sherman Avenue. The street modifications are proposed as traffic calming measures and to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue.

- Modifying the Sherman Avenue sidewalk.

The project includes adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out would match an existing bulb-out at the northeast corner of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out is intended to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue.

Project Operations⁸

For public facilities such as the proposed 901 Sherman Avenue project, the common practice is to develop a program of use before designing the building. However, this project is unique in that the building is an existing structure that provides a finite space and configuration and would retain its current footprint when fully renovated. Therefore, community members and individuals participated in focus groups to articulate the types of programs and related activities considered needed to serve Novato's unmet social, cultural, and recreational interests.

Focus group discussions conducted from June through August, 2005, and an on-line electronic survey, provided information about program needs for public use facilities in Novato. This information served as a base line for programming use of the 901 Sherman Avenue facility. Ultimately, programs that can

be supported by the size and configuration of 901 Sherman Avenue as a renovated facility were determined with assistance from the 901 Sherman Avenue Council Subcommittee.⁹ The basic operating parameters included 1) the facility would be available for use 350 days per year with 15 days set aside for custodial activities; and 2) the hours of operation would be from 9 AM to 10 PM, or 13 hours per day, excluding City Council, Planning Commission and committee meetings which could run later into the evening or early morning.

The building would be available for use by the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Commission and other City boards and commissions regularly Monday through Thursday evenings approximately 20 percent of the available time. The building would be available for use the remaining afternoons, Friday nights and weekends for programs directly serving the community, many of which would be programs sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The programs, activities and events sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department would include arts and cultural programs featuring readings, dance and musical recitals, film presentations, talent shows and similar functions; classes and enrichment programs for children and adults consisting of children's/adult theater, singing, family health and wellness programs, education and related activities; meetings, workshops and seminars; and community gatherings and special events (indoor and outdoor) featuring local history events and arts and crafts shows.

The building would also be available for rentals and private events involving small weddings and receptions, private parties, family reunions, corporate events and similar activities.¹⁰ The size and configuration of the facility would limit use to one program at a time, and perhaps two programs if they are small and can share the available space. These limitations would restrict the number of users and traffic needed to drop-off children or to park. Generally, recreation classes would be limited to one to two hours in duration. At minimum, a half hour break would be provided between programs for set up, removal or other custodial services.

Typically, the types of programs to be provided would accommodate from 10 to 40 participants. As an example, on any given week day, children's and adult classes could be conducted from 9 AM to 6 PM depending on City Council, Planning Commission or Design Review Commission start times. Parks and Recreation programs are not anticipated to be sponsored on Friday nights. The facility would be available for rentals and private purposes on most Friday evenings and about 30 weekends per year.

Project Scheduling and Demolition/Construction

Scheduling: Scheduling the renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue has not been set at this time. The merits of the project would require further review by the Novato City Council prior to determining when the renovation project would proceed. Given that review of this document would be expected to extend into early 2008, including a 45 day public and agency review period as required under CEQA, further deliberations on the project could extend into mid 2008. Demolition, relocation, construction and renovation plans are currently being reviewed by the City. Following the acceptance and award of bids, project implementation could occur in mid-2008 or later, depending on funding and other

priorities as determined. The following highlights specific demolition and construction activities contemplated by the City to be included in the project.

Demolition: Demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would be required prior to relocation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building. Demolition activities would occur over about a three day period. Demolition would include use of a track mounted tractor with an articulating bucket loading debris into a ten wheel dump truck. Waste materials would be subject to the City's Recycling and Reuse Ordinance (Novato Municipal Code Section 4-12). After demolition, moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building would take about one week following the completion of a new foundation. Raising the building would involve the use of hydraulic jacks and a tractor would be used to pull the building to the new foundation.

Dust Control: During demolition, dust (particulate) emissions will be controlled through continuous watering and the covering of truck loads. Because project construction would result in ground disturbing activities that could temporarily increase dust emissions near the project site, such emissions would be effectively controlled to prevent ambient air quality standards violations by implementing a series of dust suppression emissions as promulgated by the Bay Area Air Quality management District. These measures are: watering all active construction areas at least twice daily; covering trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials; sweeping daily (with water sweepers) paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at the construction site; and sweeping streets daily if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets. The project will be implementing these dust control procedures.

Noise: The City's contracts with demolition, construction and renovation contractors will provide for specific noise reduction measures designed to control noise emissions in the project area and reduce noise emissions on sensitive receptors. Such measures will include limiting noise-generating construction activities, including truck traffic coming to and from the site for any purpose, warming-up or servicing of equipment, demolition, and any preparation for construction to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; limiting grading activities and equipment operations to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., when City inspectors are available; and providing mufflers in good condition on equipment driven by internal combustion engines. At all times during project demolition, grading and construction, stationary noise-generating equipment are to be located as far as practicable from sensitive receptors and placed so that emitted noise is directed away from residences. The construction contractor will also be required by contract to designate a "noise disturbance coordinator" who will be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise.

Additionally, specific noise design features which have been incorporated into the renovation project design to meet interior noise compatibility standards include adding 3.5 inch thick batt insulation in the stud cavities of the exterior walls, replacing (or upgrading) the 901 Sherman Avenue windows facing DeLong Avenue to provide a minimum sound transmission class (STC) rating of 38, and including an air conditioning or ventilation system to provide a habitable interior environment when the windows are closed for noise control.¹¹

Hazardous Materials: Prior to demolition or renovation activities, identified potential mercury-containing thermostats/switches, lights, ballasts and air conditioning units will be removed and recycled or disposed of by a licensed contractor according to all applicable federal, state and local regulations. Specific procedures for removal, handling, transport and disposal to avoid the release of hazardous materials will be included in contracts for all building renovation and demolition activities, both prior to and during the work. Further, Prior to removal or demolition work that could disturb identified asbestos containing materials, a licensed asbestos abatement removal contractor will remove such materials in compliance with the most recent applicable federal, state, and local laws governing the abatement, transport, and disposal of asbestos containing materials. The removal work scope and requirements are to be included in a work plan/specification developed by a California Certified Asbestos Contractor.¹² The process for safe asbestos removal will, at a minimum, include the following steps:

- Identification and demarcation of all asbestos containing building materials (ACMs)
- Hand removal of ACMs by workers wearing clean suits and protective breathers
- Watering of all debris piles such that fugitive dust is not released
- Placement of debris in an on-site containment area such that water is filtered prior to entering the storm drainage system
- Disposal of ACMs at a Class I landfill.

Geotechnical/Drainage: The project includes specific measures to take into account underlying soils and existing drainage conditions. Support for perimeter foundations and retaining walls is to be achieved through the use of drilled, cast-in-place, reinforced concrete piers. Piers are to be interconnected with grade beams to support structural loads. Fill required for the project would include 1,400 cubic yards of selected material to construct a new building pad for 901 Sherman Avenue, the plaza and Civic Green; 900 cubic yards of material for raising and constructing a new foundation for the 1950 Annex; and 160 cubic yards of material for filling excavations left as a result of demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue.

New interior floors will consist of structural slabs or joist-supported wood designed to span between pier or pile foundations supported in bedrock. Soil movement of slabs-on-grade will be reduced by removing the weak and expansive soils. Surface and subsurface water will be controlled through the use of perimeter subdrains, wall backdrains and slab underdrains to reduce water infiltration beneath the building.¹³

2.2 GENERAL PLAN MAP DESIGNATION AND ZONING

General Plan Map

The Civic Center, which contains the project site, is located within the Community Facilities (CF) designation as shown on the Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1.¹⁴ CF designated land uses include public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, City offices, and other civic and

utility uses as well as privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses. The existing Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 0.45 (this includes 901, 905, 911, 917 Sherman Avenue and 908 Machin and a total site area of 42,000 square feet). The proposed FAR would be 0.32 (this assumes demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and removal of portions of the 1950 Annex based on a total site area of 42,000 square feet). The maximum permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is 0.8.¹⁵ The 901 Sherman Avenue project would be consistent with the CF General Plan land use designation as there would be a return of civic use to the 901 Sherman Avenue building as a result of the project. A General Plan land use amendment would not be required. This subject is discussed in Section 3.2 of this EIR, Land Use and Planning.

Project Site Zoning

The Civic Center is located within the Community Facilities (CF) Zoning District.¹⁶ The CF Zoning District is applied to areas suitable for public land uses including government offices, meeting halls, schools and libraries, and other related municipal uses. The CF Zoning District is intended to be consistent with the community facilities, public utilities, and civic uses land use designation of the General Plan. The 901 Sherman Avenue project would be consistent with the CF General Plan land use designations as there would be a return of civic use to the 901 Sherman Avenue building as a result of the project. The project is also located within two Overlay Zoning Districts in the Civic Center as indicated on the Zoning Map where special provisions apply. These districts include the Downtown (D) Overlay District and Historic (H) Overlay District. Overlay Districts provide guidance for development in addition to the standards and regulations of the primary zoning districts, where important site, environmental, safety, compatibility or design issues require particular attention in project planning. The D Overlay District is applied to areas covered by the Downtown Novato Specific Plan to provide standards for development and new land uses that recognize, protect and enhance the desired character of the downtown area. The Historic (H) Overlay District is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the Community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, architectural heritage, identity and character.

The Historic (H) Overlay District is a zoning instrument specifying the permit requirements, procedures, and development standards for new development, building alterations, and demolition activities involving buildings and parcels located within the boundaries of the District. The Historic (H) Overlay District does not prohibit the alteration and/or demolition of structures located in the District. The H Overlay may be combined with any primary zoning district established by section 19.04.020 (Zoning Districts Established). Any land use normally allowed in the primary zoning district may be allowed within the H Overlay District.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project would be consistent with the provisions of the established zoning and a zoning amendment would not be required. This subject is discussed in Section 3.2 of this EIR, Land Use and Planning.

2.3 REQUIRED APPROVALS

City of Novato

As indicated above, the project must first be approved by the City Council for the renovation project to move forward. Following project approvals, project construction and renovation plans and specifications would be reviewed and/or amended and approved by the City in accordance with the adopted mitigation measures as specified in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program prepared for the project. The project will comply with the Building Code and Fire Codes and all appendices and standards thereto.

Project construction and renovation plans and specifications would be advertised for bid by the City Public Works Department for consideration by area contractors. Construction and renovation procedures, as provided for in the construction bid documents (drawings and specifications), would be reviewed for conformity and approval by City engineers and inspectors on a continuing basis as the work progresses. Final acceptance of the completed project by the City would be given after monitoring implementation of the required mitigation measures and final inspections for conformity of the completed project with the bid documents.

Endnotes — Project Description

- ¹ City of Novato, *Historic Resources Evaluation*, Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers, April 27, 2007. According to the Resources Evaluation study, "The original 1896 building of the former Presbyterian Church of Novato at 901 Sherman Avenue appears eligible for listing in both the California Register of Historical Resources and the national Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as an individual property at the local level and possibly at the state level. The property has been found to have significance under criterion C/3 and maintains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance at the exterior." Page 16.
- ² *Historic Resources Evaluation*, Op. Cit. "The former Presbyterian manse has been found only to have minor historical significance as an individual structure under criterion C/3 and therefore appears ineligible for individual listing. The manse may be significant as a contributor to a historic district. The building is currently listed as a local historic structure in the City's Downtown Specific Plan. No formal historic district has been designated by the State and has not been evaluated for eligibility in the State or National Registers." Page 21.
- ³ *Historic Resources Evaluation*, Op. Cit., page 5. No record identifying the construction date of the Morrison House has been confirmed. "The former Morrison residence has been found only to have minor historical significance as an individual structure under criterion C/3 and therefore appears ineligible for individual listing. The residence may be significant as a contributor to a historic district. The building is currently listed as a local historic structure in the City's Downtown Specific Plan. No formal historic district has been designated by the State and has not been evaluated for eligibility in the State or National Registers." Page 24.
- ⁴ Weir/Andrewson Associates, Inc., *City of Novato, Preliminary Building Evaluation Report*, September 10, 2004, page 27.
- ⁵ The second westbound travel lane along DeLong Avenue is planned as part of the Whole Foods project circulation pattern (City File No.10506M; approved by the Novato City Council on January 23, 2006). The Whole Foods project is to be located about one block east of the Civic Center and 901 Sherman Avenue at the north side of DeLong Avenue and Railroad Avenue.

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- ⁶ Floor area calculations taken from Sheet A1.2, Floor Plan & Room Finish Schedule, prepared by Interactive Resources. See also Figure 2-4, Schematic Floor Plan, prepared by Interactive Resources. According to information from Division Chief Forrest Craig (personal communications, September 13, 2007), the Novato Fire Protection District calculates the maximum occupancy for a public space as a ratio of persons per square foot. A room that contains chairs requires 15 square feet per person. A room without chairs (i.e., standing room only), requires seven square feet per person. Therefore, since the chambers at 901 Sherman Avenue would contain 2,119 square feet of renovated floor area, the maximum occupant capacity with chairs would be 141 persons and without chairs would be 303 persons.
- ⁷ Square feet of turf area based on *Planting Plan, sheet L3.1*, prepared by Vallier Design Associates, Landscape Architecture, 50% CD Submittal, 11/26/07.
- ⁸ The programs and activities slated for 901 Sherman Avenue were formerly conducted in the Community House, the building immediately to the west of 901 Sherman Avenue. As such, the programs and activities as described are not new to the Civic Center. Data presented in this EIR is as provided in an email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.
- ⁹ The 901 Sherman Avenue Council Subcommittee was asked to develop a program that provides for public use of the renovated facility in addition to anticipated City Council, Planning Commission and various committee meetings. Data provided in a Memorandum to the City Council from Larry Dito, Director, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, January 23, 2007.
- ¹⁰ The programs, activities and events as listed would be available Monday through Thursday until 5:00 PM, Friday until 10:00 PM and weekends until 10:00 PM.
- ¹¹ Rosen Goldberg Der & Lewitz, Inc., *Novato City Council Chambers – Traffic Noise*, May 11, 2007.
- ¹² Ninyo & Moore, *Hazardous Building Materials Survey, Former City Hall Structures 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California*, March 30, 2007.
- ¹³ Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.
- ¹⁴ Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1, printed July 12, 2001.
- ¹⁵ FAR is the ratio between the amount of gross floor area and the gross site area. A FAR of 0.5 would allow a one-story building over half of a site, or a two-story building over one quarter of a site.
- ¹⁶ Novato Zoning Map, Adopted by the Novato City Council on April 24, 2001 under Ordinance No. 1441, printed on May 25, 2006.

Section 3

Environmental Setting, Impacts and Mitigation Measures

3.1 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

This section of the EIR assesses potential effects to cultural resources that could result from implementation of the proposed project. Cultural resources are defined as historic-period buildings and structures and prehistoric or historic-period archaeological resources. This section briefly describes the cultural setting of the project area and discusses known cultural resources on the project site and within the project area. Applicable state, federal, and local regulations are identified, followed by impact analysis and mitigation measures, where available, to reduce adverse impacts on cultural resources. Information on historical resources, specifically buildings and structures, is drawn from the findings of the cultural resources records search conducted by the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) at Sonoma State University in August 2007; the report entitled *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, 911 Sherman Avenue* (2007) prepared by Interactive Resources; the *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic Overlay District* (2008) prepared by PBS&J; and field surveys performed by PBS&J cultural resources staff. Property histories were taken directly from the Interactive Resources Report.¹

Setting

Regulatory Setting

Federal, state, and local governments have developed laws and regulations designed to protect significant cultural resources that may be affected by actions they undertake or regulate. The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) (16 U.S.C. 470 et. seq.) and CEQA are the basic federal and state laws governing the preservation of historic and archaeological resources of national, regional, state and/or local significance.

Federal

Federal regulations for cultural resources are primarily governed by Section 106 of the NHPA of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 470f), which applies to actions taken by federal agencies. The goal of the Section 106 review process is to offer a measure of protection to sites that are determined eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The criteria for determining NRHP eligibility are found in 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 60. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to take into account the effects of their undertakings on historic properties and affords the federal Advisory Council on Historic Preservation a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings.

The Council's implementing regulations, "Protection of Historic Properties," are found in 36 CFR Part 800. The NRHP criteria (contained in 36 CFR 60.4) are used to evaluate resources when complying with NHPA Section 106. Those criteria state that eligible resources comprise districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, association, and:

- a) are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
- b) are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or
- c) embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or
- d) have yielded or may be likely to yield, information important to history or prehistory.

State

Under CEQA, public agencies must consider the effects of their actions on both "historical resources" and "unique archaeological resources." Pursuant to Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1, a "project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment."

21084.1. Historical Resources Guidelines: A project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment. For purposes of this section, an historical resource is a resource listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources. Historical resources included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in subdivision (k) of Section 5020.1, or deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1, are presumed to be historically or culturally significant for purposes of this section, unless the preponderance of the evidence demonstrates that the resource is not historically or culturally significant. The fact that a resource is not listed in, or determined to be eligible for listing in, the California Register of Historical Resources, not included in a local register of historical resources, or not deemed significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (g) of Section 5024.1 shall not preclude a lead agency from determining whether the resource may be an historical resource for purposes of this section.

"Historical resource" is a term with a defined statutory meaning (see Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1 and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a) and (b)). The term embraces any resource listed in or determined to be eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR). The CRHR includes resources listed in or formally determined eligible for listing in the NRHP, as well as some California State Landmarks and Points of Historical Interest.

Properties included or determined eligible for a local register of historical resources, by official designation or pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution, as defined in subdivision (k) of Public Resources Code 5020.1 or deemed significant pursuant to the criteria set forth in 5021(g) are presumed to be "historical resources" for the purposes of CEQA unless a preponderance of evidence indicates otherwise (Public Resources Code, Section 21084.1).

5024.1.

(g) A resource identified as significant in an historical resource survey may be listed in the California Register if the survey meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) The survey has been or will be included in the State Historic Resources Inventory.
- (2) The survey and the survey documentation were prepared in accordance with office procedures and requirements.
- (3) The resource is evaluated and determined by the office to have a significance rating of Category 1 to 5 on DPR Form 523.
- (4) If the survey is five or more years old at the time of its nomination for inclusion in the California Register, the survey is updated to identify historical resources which have become eligible or ineligible due to changed circumstances or further documentation and those which have been demolished or altered in a manner that substantially diminishes the significance of the resource.

Unless a resource listed in a survey has been demolished, lost substantial integrity, or there is a preponderance of evidence indicating that it is otherwise not eligible for listing, a lead agency should consider the resource to be potentially eligible for the CRHR.

In general, an historical resource, under this approach, is defined as any object, building, structure, site, area, place, record, or manuscript that:

- a) is historically or archeologically significant; or is significant in the architectural, engineering, scientific, economic, agricultural, educational, social, political or cultural annals of California; and
- b) meets any of the following criteria:
 1. is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;
 2. is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;
 3. embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region, or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possesses high artistic values; or

4. has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

For historic structures, CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (b) (3) indicates that a project that follows the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties with Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring, and Reconstructing Historic Buildings, or the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (1995), shall be considered mitigated to a level of less than significant. Potential eligibility also rests upon the integrity of the resource. Integrity is defined as the retention of the resource's physical identity that existed during its period of significance. Integrity is determined through considering the setting, design, workmanship, materials, location, feeling, and association of the resource.

Local

The project site is located within the Novato Civic Center which is included within the boundaries of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan area and the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan area,. As such, use and development of the project site would be subject to the applicable provisions of these plans, including the objectives, goals, and policies of each. The project site is also located within the Historic (H) Overlay District. Applicable objectives, goals, and policies of the various elements (chapters) of the City of Novato General Plan would also apply to use and development of the project site. For a discussion of the project's consistency with the objectives, goals, and policies of these documents refer to Section 3.2 of this EIR, *Land Use and Planning*. It should be noted that the Historic (H) Overlay District is a zoning instrument and not a formally adopted historic district. The *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic (H) Overlay District* prepared by PBS&J identified a historic context and period of significance for a potential historic district within the Historic (H) Overlay District, but a historic district has not been formally evaluated or adopted.

Historical Setting

The hills and valleys of Novato were once the hunting ground of Miwok Indians. Settlement of the area by non-Native peoples began in 1839 with the granting of Rancho de Novato to Fernando Feliz. Archaeological investigations performed for the Department of Transportation by the Archaeological Research Center (ARC) along Highway 101 from the State Highway 37/U.S. 101 interchange in Novato north to Old Redwood Highway in Petaluma revealed "a complex occupational history that spans perhaps 8000 years or more, with significant activity from the Lower Archaic period (ca. 5000 B.C.) into historic times."² The ARC report inventoried and evaluated ten archaeological sites, five of which were determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A records search performed by the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) in August 2007 revealed that there were no recorded Native American archaeological resources and one recorded historic-period cultural resource within the study area which included the entire Historic Overlay District plus one-quarter mile distance. The historic-period cultural resource, the Pini Feed Mill complex is not within the Civic Center boundary. The Pini Feed Mill burned and was subsequently torn down in 2001.

The following includes a brief history of the project area as well as the history of the three buildings on the project site affected by the proposed project.

Rancho Novato

Ranchos were large landholdings granted to individuals by the Spanish, and later, the Mexican government in California either as reward for loyal service or to attract settlers. Rancho Novato was granted to Fernando Feliz, who was the first to settle in the area, by Mexican Governor Alvarado in 1839 and encompassed approximately 8,870 acres of land. Rancho Novato was comprised of land along San Pablo Bay, from Black Point to Rancho San Jose, including the land that now encompasses the city of Novato (see Figure 3.1-1). The area that would later become the town of Novato passed unchanged through several owners until J.B. Sweetser and Francis C. DeLong purchased the land as a business venture. Some of these interim owners included Jacob Primer Leese, Bazar J. Simmons, Benjamin F. Simmons (Bazar's son), W.W. Parker, S. Needham, John H. Allen, Andrew McCabe, and James Johnson. Sweetser and DeLong finalized plans to buy Rancho Novato from Andrew McCabe and James Johnson in 1856.

J.B. Sweetser and Francis C. DeLong

J.B. Sweetser and Francis C. DeLong were largely responsible for the early prosperity of Novato. After purchasing Rancho Novato lands in 1856, the former merchants planted apples, pears, apricots, cherries, peaches, and almonds, and stocked the property with hogs and dairy cows. Their agricultural operations were prosperous, and their apple orchard was once noted as one of the two largest in the world. Before the arrival of the railroad, goods were shipped from the landing on Novato Creek to San Francisco for distribution throughout the United States and to several other countries, including Australia, which received apples from Sweetser and DeLong in sealed cans. Sweetser and DeLong donated land and funds to establish many of the town's first public services. In 1879, the partnership between Sweetser and DeLong split and the land was divided. Sweetser sold most of his share to DeLong, with the exception of one square mile (today's downtown Novato).

Downtown Growth

The post office at Novato was established in 1856, with no central repository designated until over 50 years later. The Novato Grammar School was established in 1875 at what was then the west end of Main Street (later known as Grant Street) near the current Police Station. In 1879, the year the Sweetser/DeLong partnership ended, the San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad was built through Marin County and included a depot in Novato. A second depot was built in 1903, and the 1879 depot was moved to 927 Reichert Avenue where it stands today. Of the two original 1903 depot buildings only the passenger building remains, the freight depot, which was partially damaged by fire, was demolished in September 2007.

Frank Coye DeLong initiated the creation of the town in 1888 by subdividing his 6,000-acre property. The new town was laid out along the railroad tracks, which soon took the place of waterways as a transportation route for agricultural goods. In 1889, DeLong sold the majority of his land holdings to

Charles Chase's Home and Farm Company, which proceeded to auction off the parcels. Loustaunau Hall (801 Grant Ave) was built in 1889 (now Druid Hall) and still stands at the southwest corner of Grant and Reichert avenues. In 1890, the first church, Our Lady of Loretto, was built, which is northwest of the project site and outside of the Historic Overlay District boundary. One of the first structures built on Sherman Avenue was the Presbyterian Church (901 Sherman) constructed in 1896.

In 1907, the first hospital, Novato Sanatorium, was reportedly established in the Oliver House at 910 Railroad Avenue. This residence was converted for the purpose. There are actually descriptions of three different locations for Novato's first hospital; 808, 868, and 910 Railroad Avenue.

Telephone service, electricity, and running water became available to some areas of the town beginning in 1908–1912, depending on the service. The Novato Bank, the first bank in town, was established in 1913 at 826 Grant Avenue. The Chamber of Commerce was founded in 1915. In 1917, a third depot was constructed after the 1903 depot burned. Concrete sidewalks began to appear in 1922 and the Community House, still located at 908 Machin Avenue, was dedicated the same year. In 1924 Grant Avenue was paved, and in 1927, the library was established on the second floor of the Community House.

The Novato Theater was built in 1945 and still stands at 924 Grant Avenue. Novato High School opened in 1956, and local students no longer had to take the train to San Rafael to attend high school. The population of Novato increased substantially following World War II. Much of this growth was attributed to the wartime and post-war expansion of Hamilton Army Air Field, which was established in 1932. In 1947, the Novato Community Incorporated was organized and informally ran the town. In 1960, when the town of Novato was incorporated, the town headquarters were located at 826 Grant Avenue in the first Novato Bank building. The Police Department was formed in 1961 and was originally housed in the railroad depot. In 1963, City Hall was established in the old Presbyterian Church at 901 Sherman Avenue as well as the buildings at 905, 911, 900, and 908 Sherman Avenue.

Eventually, an ad hoc civic center complex formed along Sherman Avenue, between DeLong and Grant Avenues, via the conversion of several existing buildings, including the Presbyterian Church. Other than the church, Sherman Avenue developed primarily as a residential street. With the conversion of many of the homes to businesses and city offices, few buildings are still used as residences.

Property Histories

The property at the northwest corner of DeLong and Sherman avenues, extending to Blodgett Lane, was sold by Francis DeLong to the Homes and Farm Company in 1889, along with most of downtown Novato. Charles Chase originally offered to donate the property for the construction of a Methodist Episcopal Church, but this donation was not accepted. In March 1896, the Presbyterian Church of Novato purchased the property from the Home and Farm Company of California, with T.N. Machin as President, for a price of ten dollars.

901 and 905 Sherman Avenue

The Presbyterian Church of Novato functioned as a loosely assembled organization from 1892 to 1896. Town citizens first opened Sunday services in 1892 and kept the Sunday school going until October 1895 when R.W. Reynolds, a student at the San Francisco Theological Seminary, took over as acting minister and spearheaded the construction of the chapel (901 Sherman Avenue). The Church was officially incorporated on February 21, 1896, with A.D. Scott, Walter Harper, William J. Steele, D.Z. Wright, and James Smith listed as the Trustees.

A building fund of \$412 was established, and much of the labor and materials were donated from church members and local workmen. A formally trained architect was not retained for the building design; Trustee William J. Steele drew up the plans and oversaw the construction. The foundation of the building was completed on March 21, 1896, and the new church building was dedicated on July 19, 1896. When completed, the church was valued at \$1,500. The Presbyterian Church of Novato was only the second church constructed in Novato, having been preceded by the Catholic Church in 1890, and it remained Novato's only Protestant church for 52 years. In 1906, the congregation purchased a bell and installed it in the belfry.

In 1915, Charles Christensen was installed as the church's first regular pastor, and around 1918, the manse (905 Sherman Avenue) was constructed next to the church for the pastor and his family. The builder of the manse is unknown; however Reverend Christensen is thought to have constructed several rental homes around Novato to supplement his income and likely was involved in the construction of the manse. The Church purchased a new manse on Estates Drive in 1957 and converted 905 Sherman Avenue into a church office.

In 1934, just a year before Reverend Christensen's retirement, the church trustees and the Ladies' Aid Society approved the construction of an addition to house the Sunday school which had been meeting in the Community House (908 Machin Avenue) next door. The addition was constructed primarily with donated materials and labor. It was dedicated on June 24, 1934 and named the Christensen Room. Photographic evidence reveals that at some point between 1934 and 1946 the original four-over-four, double-hung lancet windows were replaced with one-over-one, double-hung lancet windows.

The second addition to the Presbyterian Church was constructed in 1950 and was a much larger undertaking than the first addition. The wing was named Trevitt Hall in honor of the church's second pastor who died in 1948 after returning from World War II. The cost of the addition was \$30,000, and it was designed by Novato architect Lloyd A. Rasmussen. The addition was constructed by carpenter Eugene MacDonald, plumber E.E. Howell, and electrician Laurence Tresch. The design included a social hall, kitchen, pastor's study, church office, and bathrooms on the main floor, and nine classrooms and storage at the basement level. Trevitt Hall was dedicated September 17, 1950. The project began under the leadership of Pastor Seth Parker, but was completed under Reverend Joseph Easter.

In 1962, the newly incorporated City of Novato, which was operating out of Babe Silva's bank building, purchased the church (901 Sherman Avenue) and the manse (905 Sherman Avenue) for use as

the new city hall and police station for \$62,500. The property was leased back to the Presbyterian Church for a period of eight months while the new church building on Wilson Avenue was under construction. However, the manse was immediately put to use as the police station. In early 1963 the City hired San Rafael architect Gordon A. Phillips to design alterations to the church to make it a suitable city hall. Some of the exterior changes included replacing the front and side doors, mounting a "Novato City Hall" sign on the bell tower, replacing the Christensen Room doors with a sliding aluminum window, replacing the glazing of several windows, and locating a new exit at the northwest corner of the former sanctuary. Numerous interior alterations included the addition of walls, the removal of doors, the removal of the alter platform, and the lowering of the ceiling height. Gordon A. Phillips was retained again in 1973 to further renovate 901 Sherman Avenue. Additional alterations were completed in 1991 by Treffinger, Walz & MacLeod of San Rafael.

911 Sherman Avenue

The building at 911 Sherman Avenue is commonly known as the Morrison house for its first resident George D. Morrison. Morrison was born in New York in 1886, and graduated from Stanford University in 1910. In 1913 he helped to establish the Bank of Novato with James Burdell, Hermann Rudolff, and A.D. Scott. Morrison served as the cashier of the Bank of Novato and continued on as cashier after the bank was sold to the Central Valley Bank in 1950.

George's wife Marge purchased the property from the Presbyterian Church of Novato in 1916. The house was constructed around 1916. No record confirming the construction date has been located, but the house does not appear on the 1911 Sanborn Insurance Map or in a panoramic photograph dated 1914. It remains unknown if the Morrison's constructed the house or if they purchased it completed. The Marin Assessor's file on the property notes that the building was remodeled in 1940.

The Morrison's lived in the house until 1964 when George Morrison sold the property for \$16,250 to the City of Novato following the death of his wife. He subsequently moved to Petaluma and retired to Bedford, Virginia, where he died in 1973.

The City transformed the Morrison house into the police station annex. The house was internally connected to the police station at 905 Sherman Avenue, the former manse, by an enclosed ramp. In general, the rooms were reconfigured, existing walls were removed, new walls were constructed, and the front porch was enclosed. The Morrison House most recently served as the offices of the Novato Code Enforcement Division.

Building Descriptions

901 Sherman Avenue – Presbyterian Church

This wood-frame building sits on a concrete foundation. The site includes an area of existing turf with decorative plantings on the north and east sides, a concrete sidewalk at DeLong Avenue, and a portion of the Civic Center parking lot. The building is generally a U-shaped plan with the original single-story church at the east end, facing Sherman Avenue, and the L-shaped one- and two-story addition to

the west. The overall building footprint covers an area of approximately 112 feet by 62 and one-half feet. Painted wood siding clad all of the building elevations, and composition shingles cover the gable roofs. The building is currently painted red with white trim.

The original church building is an example of the Victorian Gothic Style of architecture. Victorian Gothic was prevalent in the late nineteenth century, and several aspects of the style can be seen in this church, including massing, textural richness, and an emphasized verticality. Architectural features found on the church typical of the style include the lancet windows, steep gable, tall bell tower and spire, decorative diagonal and vertical wood siding, and wood embellishments on the front elevation. The earliest addition, the gable-roofed volume, was executed in essentially the same style as the original church building with the inclusion of the Craftsman knee braces under the gable end wall eave. The later, larger addition is primarily utilitarian, yet illustrates some elements of the Modern period such as low, horizontal massing and horizontal bands of windows.

An Annex and connecting structure were constructed in 1950. The Annex (known as Trevitt Hall when dedicated), included a social hall, kitchen, pastor's study, church office and bathrooms on the main floor and nine classrooms and storage in the basement. This structure has been used for City offices and storage space. The 901 Sherman Avenue building coupled with the adjacent Annex building contains about 7,300 square feet of floor area. A more detailed description of 901 Sherman Avenue, Annex and connecting structure, is provided in the report *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue* prepared by Interactive Resources.³

905 Sherman Avenue - Manse

This wood-frame structure at 905 Sherman Avenue stands about five feet north of the former church building on a small site that is primarily paved, with the exception of existing turf at the front and some plantings at the north side yard. The raised one-story, wood-frame bungalow is generally rectangular in plan and covers a footprint of approximately thirty feet by forty feet plus the former front porch. The building is Craftsman style and is of the front-gabled roof variety. The architectural style is still evident even though the building has undergone both exterior and interior alterations. Painted wood shingles clad most of the exterior walls above the crawl space level which is covered in painted horizontal shiplap siding, and composition shingles cover the roof. The building maintains several features that are common to the Craftsman style bungalow, including the projecting partial-width former front porch with a separate gable, exposed rafter tails, triangular knee braces under the overhanging eaves, an angle bay, and an exterior brick chimney. The non-original enclosed ramp connects the building to the neighboring building at 911 Sherman Avenue. Modern wall-mounted exterior lights are found on every elevation and rectangular mesh-covered openings vent the crawlspace (see also the report *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue* prepared by Interactive Resources for a more detailed description of the building).

911 Sherman Avenue – Morrison House

This wood-frame building at 911 Sherman Avenue stands on a relatively small site with a concrete sidewalk and an area of existing turf to the front, a paved alley way to the north, a parking lot to the rear, and a narrow side yard to the south. The raised one-and-a-half-story, wood-frame bungalow is generally rectangular in plan and covers a footprint of approximately thirty feet by forty feet, plus the rear sun porch. Craftsman in style, the building can be further subcategorized as a side-gabled-roof Craftsman. The architectural style is still evident even though the building has undergone both exterior and interior alterations. Painted wood shingles clad most of the exterior walls above the crawl space level, which is covered in painted shiplap siding, and composition shingles cover the roof. The building maintains several features that are common to the Craftsman style bungalow, including a centered shed dormer, exposed rafter tails, triangular knee braces under the wide overhanging eaves, and an exterior brick chimney. At the south side, a non-original enclosed ramp connects the building to the neighboring manse building. Modern wall-mounted exterior lights are found on every elevation and rectangular mesh-covered openings vent the crawlspace (see also the report *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue* prepared by Interactive Resources for a more detailed description of the building).

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Standards of Significance

Cultural resources impacts would be considered significant if implementation of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would:

- **Impact Criterion #1:** Cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.
- **Impact Criterion #2:** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.
- **Impact Criterion #3:** Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.
- **Impact Criterion #4:** Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”

Project Evaluation

Historical Resource Significance: *Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5? (Impact Criterion #1).*

Impact 3.1-1

The proposed project could cause a substantial change in the significance of 901 Sherman Avenue as an historical resource. This would be a significant impact.

Pursuant to CEQA Section 15064.5(b)(1), a “substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource means physical demolition, destruction, relocation, or alteration of the resource or its immediate surroundings such that the significance of an historical resource would be materially impaired.” The original building at 901 Sherman Avenue, the Victorian Gothic Church, was recommended as individually eligible under Criterion C of the NRHP and Criterion 3 of the CRHR through the evaluation performed by Interactive Resources as part of their 2007 report.⁴

The *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic (H) Overlay District* prepared by PBS&J concurred with findings of the 2007 Interactive Resources report that the original church building at 901 Sherman Avenue is individually eligible under Criterion C of the NRHP and Criterion 3 of the CRHR. Therefore, the original building at 901 Sherman Avenue is considered an historical resource under CEQA.

The 2007 Interactive Resources report determined that the Annex and connecting structure built in 1950, (known as Trevitt Hall when dedicated) does not appear to be historically significant in regards to the individual evaluation of 901 Sherman Avenue. However, the report recommended further study to determine if the 1950 Annex and connecting structure would contribute to a potential historic district, or if the Annex would fall outside the potential district’s period of significance.⁵ The *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic (H) Overlay District* prepared by PBS&J identified the period of significance for a potential historic district as 1875 through the 1947.⁶ Therefore, the Annex and connecting structure built in 1950 fall outside the potential district’s period of significance, and therefore do not qualify as historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. Physical effects to the Annex and connecting structure would not result in adverse impacts on historical resources, and no further actions on these elements are required.

The objectives of the project are to renovate the existing 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue and to construct a public plaza and civic green space adjacent to the building in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. The proposed project includes moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building up to 12 feet north of its current position, installing solar energy equipment on the building, and demolishing the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. The demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue are analyzed in Impact 3.1-2 below. Moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building on the project site as proposed would not diminish its historic importance because the building’s location context would be retained and not substantially altered. The building would occupy about 75 percent of its original footprint location.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” As discussed in the project description, the project includes the rehabilitation of the exterior of 901 Sherman, including such items as new roofing, a building integrated solar electric system, and a new lobby connection. The exterior rehabilitation activities are not anticipated to have a negative effect on the existing historic exterior of 901 Sherman; 901 Sherman will retain its historic appearance and architectural features. However, if performed improperly the exterior renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue could cause a substantial change in the significance of 901 Sherman Avenue as an historical resource through the destruction or impairment of defining historic features. This would be a significant impact.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-1

Use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards: The proposed exterior renovation of the original church building at 901 Sherman Avenue shall be completed in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. New additions, exterior alterations (such as solar energy equipment), or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the existing massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. An architectural historian shall be hired by the City to monitor and direct the renovation process to ensure that all renovation activities are conducted in accordance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards and the historic values of 901 Sherman Avenue are retained.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 would reduce Impact 3.1-1 to a less-than-significant level by requiring use of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in the exterior renovation of the building and inclusion historical interpretative displays. These actions would preserve the significance of 901 Sherman Avenue as an historical resource and convey information to interested members of the public regarding the historical significance of the building.

Impact 3.1-2

Demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource. This would be a significant and unavoidable adverse impact.

The objectives of the project are to renovate the existing 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue and to provide (construct) a public plaza and civic green space adjacent to the building in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. The proposed project includes demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Although the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue were evaluated and determined ineligible for individual listing on the NRHP or CRHR, both buildings are listed as local historic structures in the Downtown Specific Plan. The Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Historic Overlay District prepared by PBS&J identified the buildings as 1 contributors to a potential historic district. Therefore, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue are considered historical resources under CEQA.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” The proposed project includes the demolition of two existing buildings on the project site, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, which are considered historical resources pursuant to CEQA; therefore, the project would cause substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource; this impact is considered significant and unavoidable.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-2

Documentation/Recordation: To preserve the historic record and contribution of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to the historical profile of downtown Novato, prior to demolition, the City shall retain a professional who meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Architectural History to prepare written and photographic documentation of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue.

The documentation for the properties shall be prepared based on the National Park Service (NPS) Historic American Building Survey (HABS) / Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) Historical Report Guidelines. The proposed documentation standards shall meet the intent of NPS – Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) revised policy for developing alternate forms of documentation for properties meeting a criterion of less than nationally significant. The documentation prepared shall not be reviewed by NPS or transmitted to the Library of Congress and therefore, will not be a full-definition, HABS/HAER dataset. This type of documentation is based on a combination of both HABS/HAER standards (Levels II and III) and NPS new policy for NR-NHL photographic documentation as outlined in the National Register of Historic Places and National Historic Landmarks Survey Photo Policy Expansion (March 2005).

The written historical data for this documentation shall follow HABS / HAER Level II standards and shall be derived from the reports titled Historic Resources Evaluation prepared by Interactive Resources in 2007 and the Preliminary Building Evaluation Report prepared by Weir/Andrewson Associates, Inc. in 2004. Additional information may come from oral histories.

The written data shall be accompanied by a sketch plan of the property. Efforts should also be made to locate original construction drawings or plans of the property during the period of significance. If located, these drawings should be photographed, reproduced, and included in the dataset.

Either HABS / HAER standard large format or digital photography shall be used. If digital photography is used, the ink and paper combinations for printing photographs must be in compliance with NR-NHL photo expansion policy and have a permanency rating of approximately 115 years. Digital photographs will be taken as uncompressed .TIF file format. The size of each image will be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger, color format, and printed in black and white. The file name for each electronic image shall correspond with the index of photographs and photograph label.

Photograph views for the dataset shall include: a) contextual views; b) views of each side of each building and interior views, where possible; c) oblique views of buildings; and d) detail views of character-defining features, including features on the interiors. All views shall be referenced on a photographic key. This photograph key shall be on a map of the property and shall show the photograph number with an arrow to indicate the direction of the view. Historic photographs shall also be collected, reproduced, and included in the dataset.

All written and photograph documentation of the property shall be approved by the City prior to any construction activities.

Documentation Dissemination: The HABS/HAER-like documentation of the property shall be disseminated on archival quality paper to appropriate repositories and interested parties. The distribution of the documentation shall include the California Historical Resources Information System Northwest Information Center at Sonoma State University; the California State Library in Sacramento; the Novato History Museum; and any other local repositories determined by the City.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-2 would reduce the magnitude of Impact 3.1-2 by requiring documentation of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings and dissemination of the resource documentation. These measures would reduce the impact by preserving a written and photographic record of the buildings. However, because demolition would permanently remove the historical resources, the impact would be significant and unavoidable.

Archaeological Resource Significance: *Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5? (Impact Criterion #2)*

Impact 3.1-3

Due to the prehistoric and historic uses of the region, there is a possibility that subsurface unique archaeological and historic subsurface resources exist on the project site that could be uncovered during grading and excavation associated with building demolition and renovation. If encountered, such resources could be damaged or destroyed resulting in a significant adverse impact.

An archaeological investigation was conducted by a qualified archaeologist on November 9, 2007. Surface investigations, as well as limited subsurface testing (e.g., auguring), was conducted on the project site. Six auger tests were performed no more than 15 meters apart in the available open space on the project site. No cultural remains were encountered during the investigation and it was determined by the archaeologist that no further investigations were required prior to project implementation.⁷ However, due to the sensitive nature of the project area, discovering potential archaeological and/or historic subsurface resources on the site cannot be ruled out and the following mitigation measure is provided to protect potential discovered resources.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-3

All construction-related earth-moving activities shall be monitored by a qualified archaeologist, with experience in subsurface historic resources. If evidence of an archaeological or historic site or other suspected cultural resource as defined by CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5, including darkened soil representing past human activity ("midden"), that could conceal material remains (e.g., worked stone, worked bone, fired clay vessels, faunal bone, hearths, or storage pits) are discovered, all ground-disturbing activity within 100 feet of the resources shall be halted and City of Novato notified.

The monitoring archaeologist shall conduct a field investigation. The City of Novato shall consult with the archeologist to assess the significance of the find. Impacts to any significant resources shall be mitigated to a less-than-significant level through data recovery or other methods determined adequate by the qualified archaeologist. All data recovery or other methods shall be consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Archaeological Documentation. Any identified resources shall be recorded on the appropriate DPR 523 (A-J) form and filed with the CCIC. The implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-3 would reduce Impact 3.1-3 under Impact Criterion 2 regarding archaeological resources to a less-than-significant level.

Paleontological Resources: *Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature? (Impact Criterion #3).*

Impact 3.1-4

Grading and excavation activities necessary for the project could have the potential to unearth any undiscovered paleontological resources. If such resources were discovered they could be damaged or destroyed resulting in their loss which would be a significant adverse impact.

Paleontological resources (fossils) are the remains or traces of prehistoric animals and plants. Fossils are important scientific and educational resources because of their use in documenting the presence and evolutionary history of particular groups of extinct organisms, reconstructing the environments in which these organisms lived, and determining the relative ages and geologic processes of the strata (sediment or rock layers) in which they occur. While unlikely, grading and excavation activities for the proposed project could potentially damage or destroy paleontological resources. Inadvertent damage or destruction of paleontological resources would be a significant impact.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-4

In the event fossilized or unfossilized shell or bone is uncovered during excavation and renovation activities, the contractor shall stop work in the immediate area of the find, notify the City, and the City shall retain a qualified paleontologist to survey the site and assess the find. The paleontologist shall prescribe treatment of the find that shall be forwarded to the Director of Community Development. Treatment shall at a minimum include collection, recordation, and analysis of any significant cultural material. If a fossil find is confirmed, it shall be recorded with the U.S. Geological Survey and curated in an appropriate repository.

The implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-4 would reduce Impact 3.1-4 under Impact Criterion 3 regarding paleontological resources to a less-than-significant level.

Human Remains: *Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? (Impact Criterion #4).*

Impact 3.1-5

Grading for the project could disturb human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries. This would be a potentially significant impact.

Previous cultural resource surveys and research demonstrate that the Novato area has been inhabited by prehistoric and historic-period peoples for thousands of years. As a result, the project area is highly sensitive for the presence of subsurface human remains. Although no known cemeteries are located on the project site, this does not eliminate the possibility that remains could be found on the project site. If remains are disturbed on the site, this would result in a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation Measure 3.1-5

If human remains (including disarticulated or cremated human remains) are discovered during any phase of project renovation, all ground-disturbing activity shall be halted and the City of Novato and the County coroner shall be notified immediately, according to Section 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code. If the remains are determined by the County coroner to be Native American, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) shall be notified within 24 hours, and the guidelines of the NAHC shall be adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains.

The City of Novato shall also retain a professional archaeologist with Native American burial experience to conduct a field investigation of the specific site and consult with the Most Likely Descendant, if any, identified by the NAHC. As necessary, the archaeologist may provide professional assistance to the Most Likely Descendant, including the excavation and removal of the human remains. The City of Novato shall be responsible for approval of recommended mitigation as the archaeologist deems appropriate, taking account of the provisions of State law, as set forth in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(e) and Public Resources Code section 5097.98. The City of Novato shall implement approved mitigation before the resumption of ground-disturbing activities where the remains were discovered.

The implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-5 would reduce Impact 3.1-5 to a less-than-significant level.⁸

Cumulative Impacts

The cumulative context for historic resources is the City of Novato Historic (H) Overlay District

Impact 3.1-6

The proposed project, in combination with other projects in the Historic (H) Overlay District, could result in adverse effects to historical resources and the historic context of the Overlay District. This is considered a significant and unavoidable impact.

The Historic (H) Overlay District includes buildings associated with early development of Novato. Nearly half of those buildings have been indentified in a preliminary eligibility evaluation as contributors to a potential historic district.⁹ In the last few years several buildings within the Overlay District have been demolished; Pini Mill in 2001, 863 Grant in 2002, 870 Grant in 2006, the Freight Building at the Train Depot in 2007, and 906 & 900 Scott Court in 2007, Future development within the Overlay District could also result in the loss of individually significant historical resources, as well as contributors to a potential historic district, although no formal evaluation of a historic district has been undertaken. Because all historical resources are unique and non-renewable members of finite classes, all adverse effects or negative impacts, such as demolition, erode a dwindling resource base. Although federal, state, and local laws aim to protect historical resources, it is not always feasible to protect historical resources, particularly when preservation in place would frustrate the implementation of development projects. The loss of historical resources from past and future development within the Overlay District is a significant cumulative impact.

The proposed project includes the demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, both of which have been identified as contributors to a potential historic district in accordance with CEQA criteria. The loss of these buildings could impair the eligibility of a potential historic district to ultimately be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historic Resources. As such, the project's incremental contribution to cumulative effects on historical resources within the Historic (H) Overlay District, specifically the removal of contributors to a potential historic district, would therefore be cumulatively considerable and would constitute a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

The implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-2 as noted above would reduce the magnitude of the cumulative impact by preserving a written and photographic record of the buildings; however, because demolition would permanently remove the historical resources, the cumulative impact would be significant and unavoidable.

Endnotes — Cultural Resources

- ¹ Technical reports are on file and available for public inspection at the offices of the Novato Community Development Department, 75 Rowland Way, # 200, Novato, CA 94945.
- ² Archaeological Research Center, Between the Ocean and the Bay: Phase II Investigations at Ten Archaeological Sites along SR-101, Marin and Sonoma Counties, California, January 2006, Executive Summary page i.
- ³ Interactive Resources, 2007, *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, 911 Sherman Avenue*. This report is on file and available for public inspection at the offices of the Novato Community Development Department, 75 Rowland Way, #200, Novato, CA 94945.
- ⁴ Interactive Resources, 2007, *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, 911 Sherman Avenue*, pages 16–20.

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- ⁵ Interactive Resources, 2007, *Historic Resources Evaluation: 901, 905, 911 Sherman Avenue*, page 32.
- ⁶ PBS&J, *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic (H) Overlay District*, February, 2008, pages 8–9.
- ⁷ Letter of November 12, 2007 to Steve Marshall, Senior Planner, City of Novato, from Denise M. Jurich, RPA, PBS&J, RE: Archaeological Investigations at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California.
- ⁸ Novato Municipal Code Section 4-7 provides procedures for preserving and studying cultural resources. Specifically Section 4-7.5 provides direction on the treatment of Native American human skeletal remains.
- ⁹ PBS&J, *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic (H) Overlay District*, February, 2008, page 10.

3.2 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Introduction

This section of the EIR discusses existing land uses that occur within and around the Civic Center site where the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project is located, and evaluates the potential for land use and planning impacts in accordance with CEQA Appendix G thresholds of impact significance.¹ The potential for the disruption of existing land uses and the potential for land use incompatibilities as a result of project development are examined. It is recognized that long-term disturbances that would diminish the quality of a particular land use or community characteristic would be considered potentially significant.

Setting

Land Use

The 901 Sherman Avenue project site is located within the one-acre Novato Civic Center bounded on the south by DeLong Avenue, on the east by Sherman Avenue, on the west by Machin Avenue and on the north by Cain Lane. The project site is located at the southeast corner of the Civic Center at the intersection of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue. The Civic Center and project site are located immediately south of the City's Grant Avenue downtown core retail area (see Figure 2-1, Project Location map).

The Civic Center is included within the boundaries of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan Area, the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Area, and the Historic (H) Overlay District. The Civic Center contains eight wood frame buildings including 901 Sherman Avenue, and parking space for approximately 64 vehicles. All Civic Center buildings were previously used for City offices and administrative functions; including the Novato Police Department, which remains operational at 909 Machin Avenue.

Land uses surrounding the Civic Center and project site are primarily commercial retail. The Novato Historical Museum, Chamber of Commerce, office uses and several residences are located to the north fronting DeLong Avenue. One occupied residence is located to the east, fronting Sherman Avenue.

A new Whole Foods mixed use project is under construction one block east of the Civic Center, between Reichert Avenue and Railroad Avenue. Eleven commercial enterprises occupy the space between Cain Lane and Grant Avenue along the north edge of the Civic Center fronting Grant Avenue. Retail establishments include a video transfer store, hair salon, nail and skin care salon, chiropractic office, several clothiers, a sporting goods shop, a restaurant, a real estate office, a sweet shop and other retail establishments. Additional commerce extends along Grant Avenue on both sides of the street from Railroad Avenue in the east to the intersection of Grant Avenue and Novato Boulevard one mile to the west. However, the downtown core retail area is not relegated to Grant Avenue. Other

businesses of a wide variety extend in north and south directions along Redwood Boulevard and north of Grant Avenue along Machin and Reichert Avenues.

The 901 Sherman Avenue building is one of the first major structures to be seen along DeLong Avenue as vehicles exit US Highway 101 westbound into the City. As such, the project site is in a prominent, highly visible location with the existing red church building indicating a sense of arrival to the Downtown area.

Regulatory Conditions

The project site is assigned the Community Facilities (CF) land use designation as shown on Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1. CF designated land uses include public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, City offices, and other civic and utility uses, as well as privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses.

The project site is located within the Community Facilities Zoning District (CF). The CF Zoning District is applied to areas suitable for public land uses including government offices, meeting halls, schools and libraries, and other related municipal uses. The CF Zoning District is intended to be consistent with the community facilities, public utilities, and civic uses land use designation of the General Plan. The 901 Sherman Avenue project would be consistent with the CF General Plan land use designation as there would be a return of civic use to the 901 Sherman Avenue building as a result of the project.

In addition, the project site is located within two Overlay Zoning Districts where special provisions apply. These districts include the Downtown (D) Overlay District and Historic (H) Overlay District. Overlay Districts provide guidance for development in addition to the standards and regulations of the primary zoning districts, where important site, environmental, safety, compatibility or design issues require particular attention in project planning. The D Overlay District is applied to areas covered by the Downtown Novato Specific Plan to provide standards for development and new land uses that recognize, protect and enhance the desired character of the downtown area.

The Historic (H) Overlay District is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, architectural heritage, identity and character. The Historic (H) Overlay District is a zoning instrument specifying the permit requirements, procedures, and development standards for such activities as the alteration and demolition of structures lying within the boundaries of the District. The Historic (H) Overlay District does not prohibit the alteration or demolition of structures located within the District. The H Overlay may be combined with any primary zoning district established by section 19.04.020 (Zoning Districts Established). Any land use normally allowed in the primary zoning district may be allowed within the H Overlay District.

The project site as located within the Civic Center, is included within the boundaries of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan area and the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan area. As such, use and development of the project site would be subject to the applicable provisions of these plans, including

the objectives, goals and policies of each. Objectives, goals and policies of the various elements (chapters) of the General Plan would also apply to use and development of the project site.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Standards of Significance

Land use impacts would be considered significant if the following condition(s) were created by implementation of the 901 Sherman Avenue project.

- **Impact Criterion #1:** Physically divide an established community.
- **Impact Criterion #2:** Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan.
- **Impact Criterion #3:** Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the General Plan, specific plan, local coastal program or zoning ordinance), adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect.

Project Evaluation

Community Configuration: *Would the project physically divide an established community? (Impact Criterion #1)*

The objectives of the project are to renovate the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a City Council chamber, public meeting space, community event venue, and provide (construct) a public plaza and Civic Green space adjacent to the building in support of Civic Center public use and gatherings. As a renovation project, all activities would be confined to the existing Civic Center site. Building renovation along with completion of the public plaza and Civic Green would return civic uses to the 901 Sherman Avenue building and therefore would not divide an established community. The project would essentially be a Civic Center enhancement project and as such would constitute a beneficial community impact. Therefore, no adverse impact would occur and no mitigation would be required.

Conservation Plans: *Would the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan? (Impact Criterion #2)*

The project site is highly urbanized, meaning that the site and surrounding properties at the Civic Center are completely developed with structures and paving. Buildings at the Civic Center have been available for public use since 1896 thus diminishing habitat potential over time. Due to paving, turf mowing and past disturbance, the project site does not retain the conditions of a natural community. There is no habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan applicable to the project site or immediate area. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation would be required.

Plan Consistency: *Would the project conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? (Impact Criterion #3)*

Plans and Policies: CEQA Guidelines Section 15125 (d) states: “The EIR shall discuss any inconsistencies between the proposed project and applicable general plans ---.” Based on this guidance, An EIR uses the policy analysis as an indicator of the resources that might be affected by a project, and considers the importance a policy gives a resource in determining the significance of a physical impact. Conversely, the EIR considers the potential significance of the related physical impacts when analyzing a particular policy. Inconsistency with a policy may indicate a significant physical impact, but the inconsistency is not itself the impact. Using this approach, this EIR provides an analysis of policies of the City of Novato General Plan and analyses of other applicable plans and policies, to aid the decision makers in determining project consistency. The physical impacts of the proposed 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project are analyzed in other sections of the EIR.

The *General Plan Guidelines* published by the State Office of Planning and Research define consistency as follows: “An action, program, or project is consistent with the General Plan if, considering all its aspects, it will further the objectives and policies of the General Plan and not obstruct their attainment.” Therefore, the standard for analysis used in the EIR is based on general agreement with the policy language and furtherance of the policy intent (as determined by a review of the policy context). The project does not have to be in exact agreement with a policy for the project to be consistent with it. The determination that the proposed project is consistent or inconsistent with the General Plan policies is ultimately the decision of the City of Novato.

City of Novato General Plan: The General Plan has been termed the constitution of community land use; it is the highest expression of desired community character. In California, all other land use policies and permits must be consistent with the goals and policies of the General Plan. The General Plan serves primarily as a policy document and is used as a point of reference by public officials when making decisions on such things as specific plans, subdivisions, capital improvements, neighborhood rehabilitation and public acquisitions.

All incorporated cities and counties in California are required to develop, implement and periodically revise a plan for the comprehensive regulation of land use within territory that pertains to their planning activities. The Novato General Plan is the most current comprehensive long-term plan for the physical development of the City. This section of the EIR discusses the consistency of the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project with the relevant goals, objectives and policies of the Novato General Plan. The Novato General Plan defines a goal as “an ultimate purpose expressing community values toward which the city will direct effort.” An objective is defined as “a desired result or accomplishment related to a broader goal” while a policy is defined as “a statement of principle or guiding action that implies a clear commitment.”

The 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project is to be consistent with the relevant goals, objectives and policies of the General Plan adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect. The following pages contain a discussion of the project in relation to the relevant provisions of the

General Plan with reference to the section of this EIR which discusses the environmental impacts implicated by the relevant General Plan goal, objective or policy. The goal, objective and policy provisions presented in this analysis are direct quotations from the Novato General Plan.

Overall, the General Plan outlines a vision for the long-range physical and economic development of the City, establishes a basis for judging whether specific development proposals are in harmony with the stated vision, and provides the basis for setting priorities for detailed plans and capital improvements. The consistency discussion below utilizes a table format to make the discussion easy to read and the conclusions accessible to the public and decision makers.

**Table 3.2-1
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan**

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
Goals	
Goal 2: Retain and promote the small town character of Novato including preservation of the historic features and landmarks.	The perceived small town character of Novato would be enhanced because the existing building at 901 Sherman Avenue would be retained and improved. The project site consists of three buildings located at 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue consisting of one church and two residences that were converted to City offices in the 1960s. All of the buildings are over 50 years old. In the Historic Resources Evaluation prepared by Interactive Resources in April 2007, 901 Sherman Avenue was deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources and is therefore a historic resource under CEQA. While the project would retain the 901 Sherman Avenue building, the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would be demolished to make way for the project. Impacts related to the historic nature of these structures are discussed in Section 3.1 of this EIR, Cultural Resources.
Goal 4: Maintain and revitalize Downtown Novato as the heart of the community.	The Civic Center site includes the project site, located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Sherman and DeLong Avenues in the Downtown area. Renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building (the proposed project) which is now vacant and unused due to structural and other limitations, which make the building no longer fit for daily occupancy. Therefore, in March 2007, the Novato City Council established the renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue as one of its three-year strategic goals, which would further the intent of Foundation Goal 4. Building renovation would be further augmented with construction of a public plaza and Civic Green to support civic use of the 901 Sherman Avenue site. Downtown Community issues are further discussed in Section 3.3 of this EIR, <i>Aesthetics</i>.

Table 3.2-1 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
Land Use Chapter	
LU Objective 1: Promote development and conservation of land in Novato in the pattern shown on the Land Use Designations Map.	The 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project would be consistent with the General Plan Map CF (Community Facilities) land use designation since civic uses are permitted at the Civic Center and there would be a return of civic use to the 901 Sherman Avenue building as a result of the project. A General Plan Map amendment would not be required as discussed in Section 2 of this EIR, Project Description.
LU Policy 1 Implementation of Land Use Map: Implement the Land Use Designations Map by approving development and conservation projects consistent with the land use definitions, densities and intensities indicated in LU Table 2. Ensure consistency between the General Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other land use regulations.	Refer to the discussion above under LU Objective 1. The project land use would be consistent with the provisions of the established zoning and a zoning amendment would not be required because the project would be a continuation of a long-time civic use in the Civic Center. Refer to further discussion below regarding an analysis concerning the provisions of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan, Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan and the Historic (H) Overlay District.
LU Objective 2: Allow development consistent with infrastructure and adequate public services.	A CEQA Initial Study prepared for the project (Appendix A of this EIR) found there would be no significant adverse impacts regarding the provision of utilities and public services to serve the project (Section XI, Public Services and Section XIII, Utilities and Service Systems). Utilities and public services would be adequate to serve the project.
LU Policy 7 Growth Management: Recognize the available and planned capacity of infrastructure and public services when considering proposals for development.	Refer to the discussion above regarding LU Objective 2.
Transportation Chapter	
TR Objective 2: Improve and manage the City's roadway system to accommodate future growth and maintain acceptable levels of service.	The project includes closure of the DeLong Avenue left turn lane to northbound Sherman Avenue and preventing left turns from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. Left turn movements would be prevented by extending an existing median in DeLong Avenue between Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue. The new extended median section would include a segment designed to allow emergency vehicle access from eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue. The street modifications are proposed as traffic calming measures and to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue. The Initial Study traffic analysis (Appendix A of this EIR, Section VI), determined that the project would not lead to a significant increase in traffic or lead to exceedances of accepted Levels Of Service on local roadways.

Table 3.2-1 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
TR Policy 3 Land Use and Transportation Coordination: Manage community growth and infrastructure projects so development can be adequately served by transportation facilities.	Refer to the discussion above under TR Objective 2.
TR Policy 21 Bicycle Parking: Promote and provide adequate bicycle parking at public transit facilities, park-and-ride lots, schools, the library, parks, city offices, and commercial areas as feasible.	The Novato Municipal Code requires that places of public assembly shall provide bicycle parking spaces equal to a minimum of 10 percent of the required vehicle spaces, distributed to serve customers, visitors and employees. As such, the 901 Sherman Avenue project is designed to provide four bicycle spaces. The Novato Municipal Code requires a minimum of one motorcycle parking space to be provided for each 50 automobile spaces or fraction thereof. As such the 901 Sherman Avenue project has been designed to provide two motorcycle spaces.
TR Policy 22 Pedestrian Facilities: Promote, provide, and maintain a safe and convenient pedestrian system.	The project includes adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out would match an existing bulb-out at the northeast corner of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out is intended to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue.
Environment Chapter	
EN Policy 7 Water Quality: Encourage protection of water resources from pollution and sedimentation, and preserve their environmental and recreation values.	The City's Building Code contains drainage and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 that address the prevention of on- and off-site deposition in the storm drain system and waterways (this subject is addressed in the project Initial Study, Appendix A of this EIR, Section IV, <i>Hydrology and Water Quality</i>, parts A and C). Further, based on the existing regulatory framework of the Regional Water Quality Control Board that addresses water quality issues and adherence to the drainage and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, erosion and sedimentation would not be substantial hazards at the project site.
EN Objective 8: Reduce dependence on non-renewable energy and materials	For the project, acoustically-rated windows are proposed to replace the original single-pane glazing found throughout the building to improve sound attenuation and energy efficiency. A new cement fiber slate roof would be installed. On the south and southeast facing roof surfaces a solar energy system would be installed consisting of photovoltaic shingles shaped and mounted in a manner consistent with the cement fiber slate shingles proposed to be used on all other roof surfaces, the physical impacts of which are discussed in Section 3.3 of this EIR, Aesthetics. HVAC, Title 24 upgrades are also included.
EN Policy 28 Energy Conservation: Consider land use patterns and policies that promote energy conservation	Refer to the discussion above under EN Objective 8.

Table 3.2-1 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
EN Policy 29 Energy Conservation Measures in Buildings: Reduce energy consumption by requiring structures to meet the energy conservation requirements stipulated in the State Building code and State title 24 regulations.	Refer to the discussion above under EN Objective 8. The project is designed to conform to applicable code regulations regarding energy conservation.
EN Policy 30 Energy Efficiency in Public Programs: Assure energy efficiency in local government operations.	Refer to the discussion above under EN Policy 29.
EN Policy 32 Regional Planning to Improve Air Quality: Continue to cooperate with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) in implementing the regional Clean Air Plan.	The Initial Study prepared for the project (Appendix A of this EIR, Section VII, Air Quality), concluded the project would not be expected to result in significant emissions of ozone, ozone precursors, or particulate matter, and the project would therefore not conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's air quality plans. No adverse air quality impacts were identified for the proposed project.
EN Policy 33 Vehicle Trips: Encourage transportation facilities and modes that minimize motor vehicle use.	The project is designed to provide four bicycle parking spaces and two motorcycle parking spaces. The project includes adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue.
EN Policy 35 Watershed Management: Minimize the effects of pollution in stormwater runoff. Retain and restore where feasible the natural hydrological characteristics of watersheds in the Novato Area of Interest.	Refer to the discussion above regarding drainage and sedimentation under EN Policy 7. The increase in landscaping over existing conditions as part of the Civic Green would alter drainage patterns by decreasing site impervious surfaces by up to 0.16 acres. The decreased impervious surfaces would decrease stormwater runoff from the site and increase infiltration to the water table (hydrology issues are discussed in Initial Study Section IV, Appendix A of this EIR).
EN Policy 37 Using CEQA to Reduce Water Quality Impacts: Use the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process to identify measures to prevent erosion, sedimentation, and urban runoff pollution resulting from development.	Section IV of the Initial Study (Appendix A of this EIR) prepared for the project, Hydrology and Water Quality, discusses design measures to prevent erosion, sedimentation and urban runoff. See also the discussion above under EN Policy 7 Water Quality. No significant hydrology and water quality impacts are identified for the project.
Safety and Noise Chapter	
SF Objective 1: Reduce seismic hazards.	Section III of the Initial Study prepared for the project (Appendix A of this EIR), Geology and Soils, addresses the issue of seismic hazards and protection from seismic hazards. No significant seismic hazards impacts are identified for the project.
SF Policy 3 Slope and Soil Instability: Continue to enforce existing regulations and procedures to identify potential hazards relating to geologic and soils conditions.	Section III of the Initial Study prepared for the project (Appendix A of this EIR), Geology and Soils, addresses the issue of geologic and soils hazards and protection from geologic and soils hazards. No significant geologic and soils hazards impacts are identified for the project.

Table 3.2-1 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
SF Policy 9 Storm Drainage System: Maintain unobstructed water flow in the storm drainage system.	Refer to the discussion above regarding drainage and sedimentation under EN Policy 7 and EN Policy 35 regarding watershed management.
Public Facilities and Services Chapter	
PF Policy 2 Public Buildings: Ensure that the public buildings in Novato are adequate to provide services for Novato residents under the development provided for in the General Plan.	Over the past several years the City has focused on identifying ways to revitalize the former Civic Center area and return government services and community oriented activities to downtown Novato. In March 2007, the Novato City Council established the renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue as one of its three-year strategic goals directed toward revitalization of the Civic Center and downtown area. Accordingly, the City Council directed staff to initiate project planning and design for the proposed renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue.
Community Identity Chapter	
CI Objective 1: Build on and strengthen Novato's unique identity and sense of place.	With the project, the perceived small town character of Novato would be enhanced to the degree the existing building at 901 Sherman Avenue would be retained. The structure would not be demolished or removed from the site. No new large building structures that could detract from the perceived small town character of Novato would be constructed under the project as proposed. The 901 Sherman Avenue building, because of its prominent location, would continue to identify a major entry to the City along westbound DeLong Avenue.
CI Policy 1 Compatibility of Development with Surroundings: Ensure that new development is sensitive to the surrounding architecture, topography, landscaping, and to the character, scale, and ambiance of the surrounding neighborhood. Recognize that neighborhoods include community facilities needed by Novato residents as well as homes, and integrate facilities into neighborhoods.	Refer to the discussion above under CI Objective 1 regarding community identity and sense of place. The project would not be new development per se. The project would represent the reinstatement of a community facility because the project would involve reuse of an existing historic structure.
CI Policy 11 Entryways: Encourage the development of entryways to the City through use of distinctive signs, street lighting, landscaping and street trees.	A prominent sign bearing the words "City of Novato" currently adorns the existing building above the front entry, which would remain in place after project completion. The 901 Sherman Avenue building would continue to signal a major entry to the City along westbound DeLong Avenue. As for landscaping, the project includes development of an outdoor public plaza and Civic Green at the north side of the structure and would consist of decorative paving, ornamental trees and shrubs and retaining walls. The public plaza would serve as the primary point of entry to 901 Sherman Avenue and enhance visual appearances around the building.

Table 3.2-1 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
CI Objective 7: Establish the Downtown as the primary center for community and cultural activities.	Refer to the discussion above under PF Policy 2 Public Buildings.
CI Policy 17 Downtown Diversity: Maintain and support the diversity of businesses and services Downtown.	Refer to the discussion above under PF Policy 2 Public Buildings. No existing businesses would be removed to allow for project implementation.
CI Policy 20 City Hall: Maintain the City Hall campus and appropriate community facilities downtown.	Refer to the discussion above under PF Policy 2 Public Buildings:
CI Policy 25 Architectural and Landscape Design: Require attractive architectural and landscape design for all new developments as well as for expansion to existing uses, consistent with Downtown Specific Plan guidelines.	Refer to the discussion above under CI Policy 11 Entryways. See also Table 3.2-2 below regarding an analysis with respect to the goals and policies of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan.
CI Objective 11: Preserve archaeological and historic resources.	Physical impacts to archaeological and historic resources are discussed in Section 3.1 of this EIR, Cultural Resources. Mitigation Measures provide for preserving historic resources and any archaeological resources discovered during construction of the project. The project itself calls for retention and renovation of the building at 901 Sherman Avenue, which is deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of Historical Resources. The project site consists of three buildings located at 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue consisting of one church and two residences that were converted to City offices in the 1960s. All of the buildings are over 50 years old. All three buildings are also located in a locally designated Historic (H) Overlay District and are therefore considered contributors to the District. While the project would retain the 901 Sherman Avenue building, the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would be demolished to make way for the relocation and renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue. The project would preserve one historic resource on the project site while removing two other historic resources. The resource being retained, the former Presbyterian Church, is the most significant of the three because it retains a significant degree of integrity and is individually eligible for listing on the NRHP and CRHR.
CI Policy 30 Archaeological Resources Protection: Continue to protect archaeological resources.	Refer to the discussion above under CI Objective 11.
CI Policy 31 Historic Buildings, Sites and Districts: Identify, recognize and protect sites, buildings, structures and districts with significant cultural, aesthetic and social characteristics which are part of Novato's heritage.	Refer to the discussion above under CI Objective 11.

Table 3.2-1 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Novato General Plan

Goals, Objectives and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
CI Objective 12: Support public art and sculpture.	The project includes development of a public plaza and Civic Green at the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue in its relocated position. The plaza would consist of decorative paving, ornamental landscaping, and retaining walls. The Civic Green is planned to be a turf area of up to approximately 7,000 sq. ft. and is intended to be available in support of public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. New ornamental trees and shrubs would be included in the landscape plan to create an attractive gateway appearance. Public art is planned to be incorporated into the landscape designs for the project, including the public plaza, and inside 901 Sherman Avenue.
CI Policy 32 Public Art: Promote public art that enhances the cultural life of the community.	Refer to the discussion above under CI Objective 12.

Downtown Novato Specific Plan

The Specific Plan is one of many policy or regulatory tools used by local governments to guide community development. While the overall guidance for physical development is provided by the General Plan as noted above, setting forth goals, objectives and policies for the entire jurisdiction covering a variety of subject areas, a Specific Plan generally addresses the same subject areas to the extent they apply, but for a localized area and in greater detail. In effect, the Specific Plan provides a bridge between the General Plan and more localized development proposals providing policy and regulatory guidance.²

A Specific Plan was prepared as a tool to help revitalize the Downtown area of Novato and to help ensure that the Downtown again becomes the economic, social and cultural center of Novato.³ The effort to revitalize the Downtown began in about 1994 and the desire for a Downtown Specific Plan grew out of the public workshops and hearings conducted on the subject of Downtown revitalization. The overall goals and policies in the Downtown Specific Plan provide the legal framework for the Plan. The Novato Civic Center area is included within the boundaries of the Specific Plan area. This section of the EIR presents the relevant Specific Plan goals and policies pertaining to the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project and discusses project consistency with those goals and policies. It should be noted that the Specific Plan was adopted by the City Council on July 14, 1998, prior to closure of the Downtown Civic Center complex and relocation of governmental offices to 75 Rowland Way in 2004. Therefore, when the Specific Plan was developed, it was assumed that City offices would remain in the Downtown as policies for Downtown revitalization were developed.

Table 3.2-2
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan

Goals and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
Plan Framework and Background Chapter	
Downtown Goals Statement (Land Use): Maintain City Hall downtown.	Over the past several years the City has focused on identifying ways to revitalize the former Civic Center area and return government services and community oriented activities to downtown Novato. The project is recognized by City officials as being a significant component in strengthening the vitality of the Downtown retail business district.
Downtown Goals Statement (Circulation): Create a pedestrian-oriented Downtown built and maintained at a human and village scale.	The project includes adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out would match an existing bulb-out at the northeast corner of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out is intended to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue. The public plaza and Civic Green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in support of the public use and gatherings hosted at the site would further enhance the pedestrian environment surrounding the project.
Downtown Goals Statement (Promotions and Events): Promote more community gathering events in downtown.	Refer to the discussion above under Downtown Goals Statement (Land Use).
Land Use Policy LU 6: Increase opportunities for gathering places. Reinforce existing gathering places and introduce new gathering places where people can meet.	Although Land Use Policy LU 6 appears to focus on activities along Grant Avenue in the core Downtown retail area, it would pertain as well to the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project because the project is included in the Downtown area. Refer to the discussion above under Downtown Goals Statement (Land Use). The public plaza and Civic Green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building would support public use and gatherings hosted at the site.
Urban Design Policy UD 8: Install appropriate art work to animate the pedestrian environment. Install, where feasible and appropriate, water features, wall and sidewalk tiles, wall murals, benches, planters, drinking fountains and art works to lend identity, interest and charm to downtown.	The project includes development of a public plaza and Civic Green at the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue. The plaza would consist of decorative paving, ornamental landscaping, and retaining walls. The Civic Green is planned to be a turf area of up to approximately 7,000 sq. ft. and is intended to be available in support of public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. New ornamental trees and shrubs would be included in the landscape plan to create an attractive gateway appearance. Public art is planned to be incorporated into the landscape designs for the project, including the public plaza and inside 901 Sherman Avenue.
Recommendations for Improvements Chapter	
Land Use Policy LU 21.1: Beautify Sherman Avenue as a gateway to Downtown. Consider horizontal or vertical banners at Sherman and DeLong welcoming visitors to Downtown. Use decorative paving to delineate diagonal parking lanes within an overall decorative pattern curb to curb. Install street trees, benches, trash receptacles, bike racks, a City Hall Campus directory and interpretive signs for historic buildings.	While the project would not include the installation of banners at Sherman and DeLong Avenues, the project would include new ornamental trees and shrubs in the landscape plans to create an attractive gateway appearance and enhance visual conditions along Sherman Avenue. Public art is planned to be incorporated into the landscape designs for the project, including the public plaza and inside 901 Sherman Avenue. Bike racks will be provided as required in the City Code. The Cultural Resources Section of this EIR (Section 3.1) prescribed a mitigation measure that includes interpretive signs for 901 Sherman Avenue to convey the history of the project site and the three buildings included in the proposed project (see Section 3.1, Cultural Resources).

Table 3.2-2 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan

Goals and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
Urban Design Policy UD 9: Designate specific design elements for key gateways. Designate as key gateways for specific design enhancements the following: Sherman Avenue/DeLong Avenue.	The project site is located at the intersection of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue. A prominent sign bearing the words "City of Novato" currently adorns the existing building above the front entry which would remain in place after project completion. The structure would continue to be visible from existing vantage points and signal a major entry to the City along westbound DeLong Avenue.
Infrastructure Chapter	
Circulation and Parking Policy CP 9: Consider installation of traffic control devices to prohibit left turns from Sherman onto DeLong, or one-way only northbound on Sherman	The project includes closure of the DeLong Avenue left turn lane to northbound Sherman Avenue and preventing left turns from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. Left turn movements would be prevented by extending an existing median in DeLong Avenue between Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue.
	The new extended median section would include a segment designed to allow emergency vehicle access from eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue. The street modifications are proposed as traffic calming measures and to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue. Sherman Avenue would not be converted to a northbound one-way only street.
Circulation and Parking Policy CP 16.1: New parking shall be located behind buildings which front on streets in the Downtown Core district. Parking may be located adjacent to side streets for corner lots, subject to design review.	The project would eliminate approximately 11 parking spaces located at the Civic Center and provide an additional two-parking stalls on Sherman Avenue where Blodgett Lane is planned to be closed. This would result in a net 57 parking spaces to be provided at the Civic Center. This parking would continue to be located behind the commercial buildings fronting Grant Avenue and behind the Civic Center buildings fronting DeLong and Sherman Avenues. Based on the 42 spaces required by the Municipal Code, the project would meet code.
Design Guidelines Chapter	
Urban Design Policy UD 11.1-3: Site and landscape designs shall incorporate outdoor pedestrian use areas, with such amenities as trellises, shade trees, raised planters, landscape berms and fountains to create useable, inviting, semi-protected rest areas. Such courtyards and plazas shall be visible from street corridors and major pedestrian access routes.	Refer to the discussion above under Urban Design Policy UD 8.
Urban Design Policy UD 11.1-5: Siting of buildings shall take into consideration preserving views of Mt. Burdell, Big Rock Ridge and other surrounding hillsides for people in buildings and on the streets.	Visual quality impacts are discussed in Section 3.3 of this EIR, Aesthetics. Moving the 901 Sherman Avenue structure 10 to 12 feet north of its current location and removing the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would not obstruct views of Mt. Burdell and adjacent hillside areas, but instead would be expected to afford wider views within the immediate project site area. Relocation would not reposition the structure in such a way as to

Table 3.2-2 (Continued)
Project Consistency Analysis with the
Relevant Provisions of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan

Goals and Policies ↓	Analysis ↓
Building Design and Facades Policy UD 12.1-4: Original architectural features, fixtures and hardware shall be retained or replaced with compatible elements.	substantially obstruct views of 901 Sherman Avenue or other existing buildings and trees in the local area. The structure would continue to signal a major entry to the City along westbound DeLong Avenue. Relocation would also increase perceived road corridor width thus enhancing sight lines and sense of movement through the area. The Historic (H) Overlay District, which includes the 901 Sherman Avenue building as a contributor to the District, contains guidelines for the construction, repair, alteration, or demolition of historic structures within the District (see the discussion of impacts under Section 3.1 of this EIR, Cultural Resources, for additional information). Given the project would involve a comprehensive renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building that retains the architectural integrity and appearance of the structure in accordance with the District guidelines for repair and renovation of historic structures, the 901 Sherman Avenue portion of the project would comply with the H Overlay Zoning District which is intended to protect historically significant structures and be consistent with Building Design and Facades policy UD 12.1-4. The project also calls for demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue which would be a significant impact under CEQA as discussed in Section 3.1, Cultural Resources. Although the Historic (H) Overlay District is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the community as historically significant elements, the District policies do not prohibit the alteration and/or demolition of structures lying within the District. The District permit requirements and development standards recognize there are circumstances under which the alteration and/or demolition of a structure(s) in the District is necessary and appropriate, including where a greater public benefit would be conveyed as opposed to retaining a structure (s). The City Council, as the project review authority, would need to balance these interests when determining how to proceed with the project.
Urban Design Policy UD 12.1-8: Additions and alterations shall reflect the same basic design theme of the building including scale, style, form, materials and color.	Refer to the discussion above under Building Design and Facades Policy UD 12.1-4.
Urban Design UD 12.2-1: When landscaping exists, dead and obsolete plant materials, irrigation equipment and planter boxes shall be repaired or replaced.	All shrubs and groundcovers, including dead and obsolete plant materials, currently surrounding 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would be removed to allow for building relocation, demolition and project construction. New plant materials, including decorative trees, shrubs and groundcovers would be installed as part of the project in accordance with a landscaping plan developed for the project (see Section 2 of this EIR, Project Description, Figure 2-4, Schematic Landscape Plan).

Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Project

California Community Redevelopment Law authorizes the local establishment of redevelopment agencies and redevelopment projects to facilitate economic revitalization in predominately urbanized areas where blighted conditions currently exist which “cannot reasonably be expected to be reversed or alleviated by private enterprise or governmental action, or both, without redevelopment.”

Tax increment financing is the primary funding mechanism for redevelopment which allows the local Redevelopment Agency to receive a portion of future property tax revenue growth which arises from future development and associated increases in property value within a redevelopment area. The tax revenue allocated to the Redevelopment Agency is then used to support the costs of implementing a redevelopment project. The Redevelopment Agency may use the future tax increments to pay redevelopment activity costs directly or it may borrow funds or issue bonds that are supported by the future tax increment revenues.

A Redevelopment Plan must conform to the goals and objectives of the local General Plan. A Redevelopment Plan for Downtown Novato has been prepared.⁴ The Civic Center, which includes the 901 Sherman Avenue project site, is included in a Redevelopment Project area established by the Plan.

The Downtown Redevelopment Plan is intended to assist the City of Novato in achieving the goals and objectives of the Novato General Plan.⁵ The Redevelopment Plan contains a series of goals and objectives similar to those listed in the General Plan and Downtown Novato Specific Plan, it also lists the funding, land use and numerous redevelopment actions to be undertaken in implementing the Plan. The following goals of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan are relevant to the proposed project:

- The elimination and prevention of the spread of blight and deterioration, and the conservation and rehabilitation of the Project Area in accordance with the City’s General Plan, specific plans and local codes and ordinances.
- The re-planning, redesign, and development of underdeveloped or poorly developed areas that are underutilized or improperly utilized.
- The strengthening of the economic base of the Project Area by the redevelopment and rehabilitation of structures and installation of needed site improvements.

In general, the objectives of the Redevelopment Plan include using redevelopment as a strategy to attract private and public investment in underutilized areas; attracting new businesses to the area; improving physical conditions of existing residential and non-residential development; making more efficient use of existing public infrastructure and services; attracting new businesses; and providing a more favorable relationship between jobs and housing opportunities. Further, the Redevelopment Plan presents a process and basic framework within which the Downtown Specific Plan is to be implemented

and by which the tools are provided to the Redevelopment Agency to fashion, develop and proceed in accordance with the provisions of the Specific Plan itself.

Table 3.2-1 above provides a consistency analysis of the relevant goals and objectives of the General Plan as pertains to the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project. Further, a consistency analysis of the project with the goals and policies of the Downtown Novato Specific Plan which serves as a bridge between the General Plan and more localized development proposals providing policy and regulatory guidance is provided in Table 3.2-2. In sum, because the Redevelopment Plan is to conform to the goals and objectives of the General Plan, to the extent the project would be in conformance with the goals and policies of the General Plan, the project would also be in conformance with the intent of the Redevelopment Plan for revitalization of the Downtown.

Historic (H) Overlay District

The City established a Historic (H) Overlay District as noted previously with the following purpose:

“The H overlay zoning district is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato’s cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, architectural heritage, identity and character.”
(City of Novato Zoning Code, Section 19.16.060)”

The Historic (H) Overlay District is a zoning instrument, specifying the permit procedures and development standards applicable to structures and parcels lying in the District. The H Overlay may be combined with any primary zoning district established by section 19.04.020 (Zoning Districts Established). Any land use normally allowed in the primary zoning district may be allowed within the H Overlay District.

About 70 buildings are included within the Historic (H) Overlay District (see the discussion in Section 3.1 of this EIR, *Cultural Resources*, for additional information). The project involves a comprehensive exterior renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building. The proposed exterior renovations will retain the architectural integrity and appearance of 901 Sherman in accordance with the District guidelines for repair and renovation of historic structures. Likewise, the exterior renovation of the building would comply with the District’s intent to protect historically significant structures. As such, the renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue, as proposed, would appear to be in conformance with the provisions of Historic (H) Overlay District Section 19.16.060.⁶

Under CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (2), historical resource is described: “A resource included in a local register of historical resources as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, shall be presumed to be historically or culturally significant.” Correspondingly, Section 5020.1(k) of the Code defines local register of historical resources as follows: “Local register of historical resources means a list of properties officially designated or recognized as historically significant by a local government pursuant to a local ordinance or resolution.” CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) also states “A project with an effect that may cause

a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.” Therefore, structures within the Historic District that are contributors to the district are considered historic resources under CEQA “unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that it is not historically or culturally significant.” Such structures must be addressed under CEQA.

While renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building would comply with the Historic (H) Overlay District intent to protect historically significant structures, the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would remain a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA as discussed in Section 3.1, *Cultural Resources*. Although the Historic (H) Overlay District is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the community as historically significant, the District policies does not prohibit the alteration and/or demolition of structures lying within the District. The District permit requirements and development standards recognize there are circumstances under which the alteration and/or demolition of a structure(s) in the District is necessary and appropriate, including where a greater public benefit would be conveyed as opposed to retaining a structure(s). The City Council, as the project review authority, would need to balance these interests when determining how to proceed with the project.

Endnotes — Land Use and Planning

- ¹ City of Novato, *Environmental Review Guidelines*, revised April, 2000, adopted by the City of Novato City Council to implement the California Environmental Quality Act, page 7.
- ² The authority for preparation of specific Plans is found in the California Government Code, Sections 654450 through 65457.
- ³ *Downtown Novato Specific Plan*, adopted by the Novato city council on July 14, 1998 by Resolution Numbers 97-98 and 103-98, revised as of March 27, 2001 by resolution Number 33-01,
- ⁴ *Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Project*, prepared by the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Novato, June, 1999.
- ⁵ Source: Final Environmental Impact Report, Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Project, State Clearinghouse Number 99012060, May, 1999, page 2-8
- ⁶ The Initial Study prepared for the project (Appendix A of this EIR), analyses the project with respect to the provisions of other applicable plans including transportation and air quality. Section VI, *Transportation/Traffic*, contains a discussion and analysis of intersection level of service standards adopted by the City of Novato. Section VII of the Initial Study, *Air Quality*, contains a discussion and analysis of the project with respect to air quality plans adopted by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

3.3 AESTHETICS

Introduction

This section of the EIR examines the aesthetic (visual quality) and urban design aspects of implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project. Anticipated changes in visual character, conditions and/or visual quality of the site and its surroundings as a result of changes in physical appearances with the project fully implemented are examined. The physical form of buildings and the layout of structural elements and open spaces are included in the analysis. It is recognized that the perception of aesthetic or visual conditions and the assessment of visual impact would vary depending on the mind-set of the viewer and individual sense of aesthetics as explained further herein. However, thresholds of impact significance are provided on which to base the assessment of aesthetic impact.

Setting

Project Site and Surroundings

The 901 Sherman Avenue project site occupies the southeast portion of the approximate one-acre Civic Center property located north of DeLong Avenue and west of Sherman Avenue. The project site buildings at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue face directly on Sherman Avenue. Street parking is available along both sides of Sherman Avenue.

The Civic Center contains eight wood frame buildings including 901 Sherman Avenue, and parking space for approximately 64 vehicles. As noted in Section 3.2, *Land Use and Planning*, the Civic Center and project site are located immediately south of the City's Grant Avenue downtown core retail area (see Figure 2-1, Project Location map). The Civic Center is included within the boundaries of the downtown Novato Specific Plan Area, the downtown Novato Redevelopment Area, and the Historic (H) Overlay District.

Notably, recent redevelopment activities in the downtown business area under the Redevelopment Plan¹ have generated significant improvements in appearances through street repaving, street tree plantings, new street lighting, building renovation and decorative pedestrian features that provide a revitalized sense of business community. The small town character of Novato has been reinforced through these redevelopment efforts by enhancing the pedestrian environment and retaining the wood frame one- to two-story structures fronting Grant Avenue

DeLong Avenue extending west from US Highway 101 is a major entry to downtown Novato. The westbound lanes of DeLong Avenue focus directly on the project site, and then curve gradually to the south away from the site. Accordingly, the project site is in a prominent, highly visible location with the existing red church building at 901 Sherman Avenue providing a sense of arrival to the downtown. The 901 Sherman Avenue building is the principal structural feature to be seen by the westbound motorist along this major arterial into the City. The words "City of Novato" displayed on a white placard fixed to the building front clearly indicate arrival has been achieved. Erected in 1896 as a

single-story Presbyterian church with ascending steeple, the 901 Sherman Avenue building clearly symbolizes Novato's small town community character as referred to in the City's General Plan policies and related planning documents.

As explained in Section 3.2, Land Use, land uses surrounding the Civic Center and project site are primarily commercial/retail. Also, the Novato Police Department is located immediately to the west fronting Machin Avenue. The Novato Historical Museum, Chamber of Commerce, office use and several residencies are located to the north fronting DeLong Avenue. Two former City of Novato offices converted from residences are located to the east fronting Sherman Avenue opposite the project site. Most buildings are of one to two story wood-frame construction over 50 years old with the exception of the police department which is of contemporary masonry construction.

Most of the Civic Center area, bounded by DeLong Avenue on the north, Machin Avenue on the west, Cain Lane on the south and Sherman Avenue on the east is used as parking space for City employee and public vehicles. Civic Center buildings including 901 Sherman Avenue (with the Annex and connecting structure), Community House located along DeLong Avenue, the Police Department at 909 Machin Avenue and the structures at 900, 905, 908, 911 and 917 Sherman Avenue block views into interior portions of the site thus screening views of parked cars. Views into the site are available predominantly from Machin Avenue opposite the police department. Commercial structures between Cain Lane and Grant Avenue obstruct views into the parking portion of the project site from the core downtown area.

None of the existing buildings at the Civic Center are currently occupied or used as office space. The existing structures are either vacant or used for materials storage as evidenced in walking or driving through the area. Overall, the Civic Center as it exists today does not share the more up-to-date redeveloped profile the downtown exhibits. Nevertheless, the 901 Sherman Avenue building may be considered a locally important visual resource due to its height and location adjacent to DeLong Avenue serving as a significant visual landmark on a major westbound entry into the City. The buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue do not share the same visual importance with 901 Sherman Avenue due to their lower profile, close spacing, and greater distance from DeLong Avenue.

The project site is located in the "Central Neighborhood" district, described in Appendix A of the General Plan entitled Novato Neighborhoods. The Central Neighborhood includes downtown Novato and the Civic Center. Although there are no City of Novato designated scenic vista points from which to enjoy views in the area, Mt. Burdell and adjacent hillside areas are visible in the background to the north from many locations around the Civic Center area, including locations near the project site. As noted in Appendix A, "Various hills provide a scenic backdrop for the urban development east of downtown, and in the northwest and southwest parts of the district. Plan policies require that views be protected in any development project."

There are no state designated scenic highways in the project area. State Highway 37 east of U.S. 101 which originates several miles southeast of the project site is listed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as an Eligible State Scenic Highway, Not Officially Designated. While 901 Sherman Avenue is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, no scenic highways are in the

vicinity of the project site; therefore, no features on the project site, including 901 Sherman Avenue as a scenic resource, are visible from a state scenic highway.

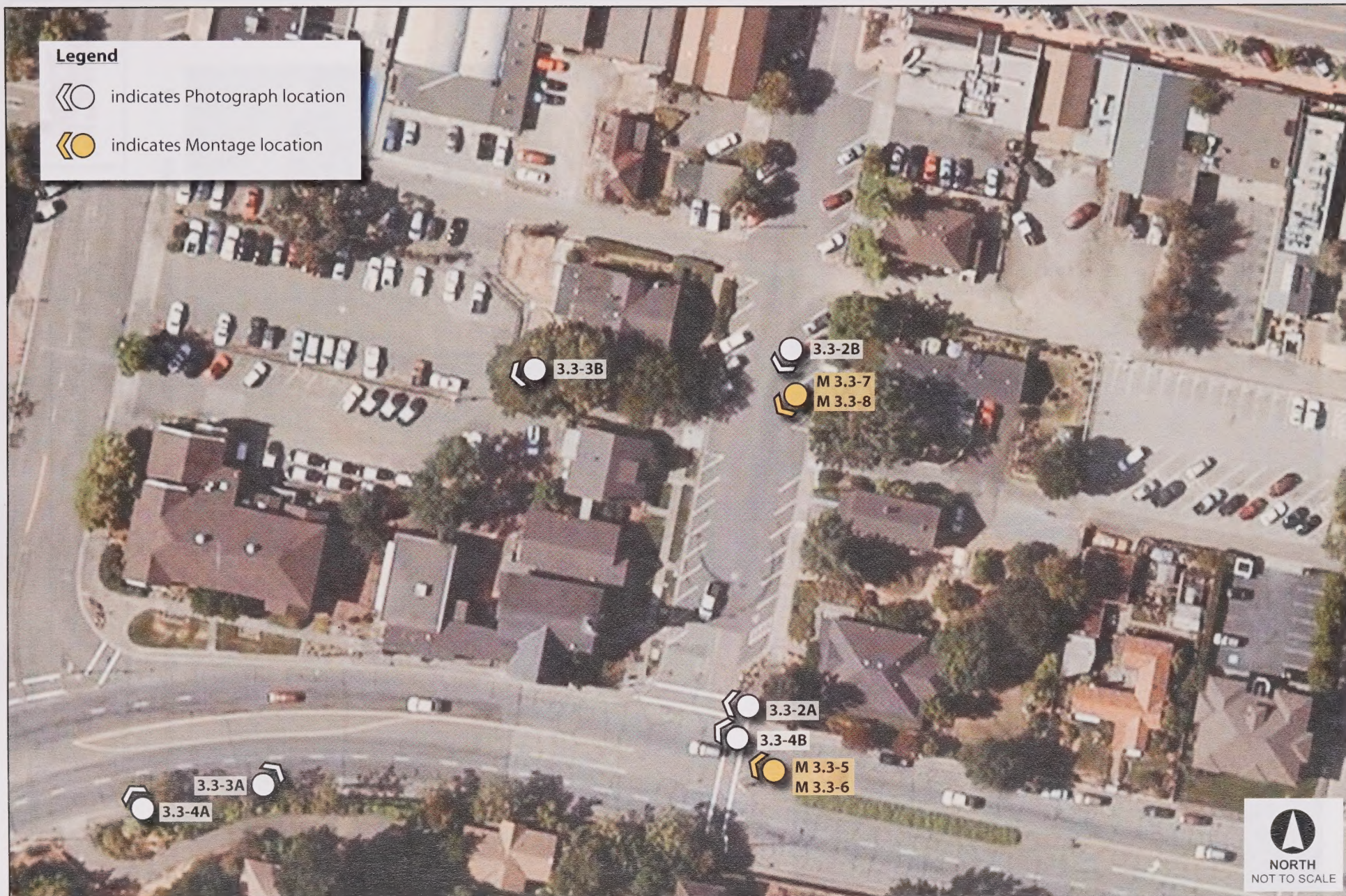
With respect to lighting, standard City “Cobra” street lights are located along DeLong Avenue to provide nighttime illumination in the project area. Additional cobra lighting is provided throughout the local street network and within the Civic Center parking area. Decorative street lighting has been provided in the City’s downtown area along Grant Avenue as part of downtown redevelopment.

Excluding street plantings along Grant Avenue in the downtown, there is no coherent landscape plan implemented in the area that would otherwise unify and provide a strong sense of identify respecting land uses and streets surrounding the Civic Center. Ornamental plantings of trees and shrubs have occurred through time on a random basis as the various properties have developed.

Site Photography

To illustrate visual conditions within and surrounding the project site, a series of photographs are provided on Figures 3.3-2 through 3.3-4. The viewpoint locations are illustrated on Figure 3.3-1, Photograph Location Map. The following summarizes what is shown in the photographs:

- Figure 3.3-2A is a view of the 901 and 905 Sherman Avenue buildings as seen from westbound DeLong Avenue. This is a typical view to be experienced of the 901 Sherman Avenue building on westbound DeLong Avenue, a principal entry to the downtown area of the City as noted previously.
- Figure 3.3-2B is a southwest facing view at Sherman Avenue of the 911, 905 and 901 Sherman Avenue buildings (right to left) illustrating the appearance of the three project structures as a group. This is a typical view of the building grouping as seen from both southbound and northbound Sherman Avenue (see also Figure 3.4-4B). Grant Avenue and the downtown core retail area is immediately north of the photograph location.
- Figure 3.3-3A is a view of the 901 Sherman Avenue building and the Annex as the structures appear to the motorist along eastbound DeLong Avenue approaching US Highway 101. US Highway 101 is located about 2,000 feet east of the photograph location, and is not visible in the field of view. The Community House is located to the left just outside the photo image area and is not visible in the photograph (see Figure 3.3-4A for a view of the Community House).
- Figure 3.3-3B is a view west into the Civic Center parking area at Cain Lane. The Community House (previous location of the Council Chambers) appears on the left side of the photograph. The police Department building is visible in the background.
- Figure 3.3-4A is a northwest facing view at the intersection of DeLong and Machin Avenues. The Community House figures prominently in the view, as does the Police Department building. Mt. Burdell, a major land form in the area, appears in the background.
- Figure 3.3-4B is a northwest facing view at the intersection of DeLong and Sherman Avenues. The viewpoint location is one block east of the intersection of DeLong and Machin Avenues (Figure 3.3-4A). The top portion of Mt. Burdell appears above the 905 Sherman Avenue





A View of 901 and 905 Sherman Avenue from westbound DeLong Avenue



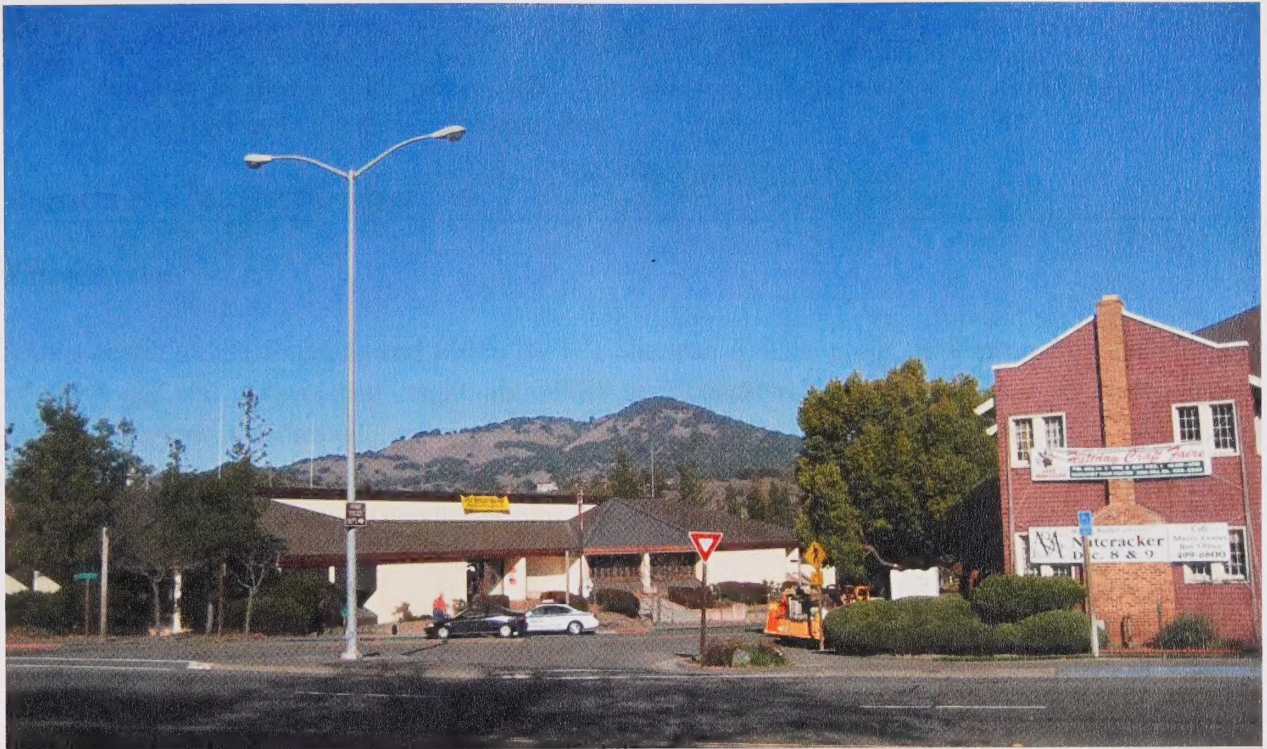
B View Southwest at Sherman Avenue of 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue Buildings.



A View of the Annex and 901 Sherman Avenue from Eastbound DeLong Avenue



B View West into Civic Center Parking Area at Cain Lane



A View Northwest at Intersection of DeLong Avenue and Machin Avenue



B View Northwest at Intersection of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue

building as shown in the photograph. The two-story structure in the right middleground fronts Grant Avenue in the downtown core area.

Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Introduction

Visual conditions surrounding and within the 901 Sherman Avenue project site result from the interplay of developed and undeveloped conditions, which vary considerably from point to point depending on viewer location as indicated in the photographs provided in this section of the EIR. The future appearance (and thus visual quality and community character) of the 901 Sherman Avenue project site would be the result of existing conditions plus project implementation as proposed.

Standards of Significance

Visual quality is the perceived aesthetic value of an area and is based on a combination of inherent natural features and physical conditions, either natural, man-made or both. The analysis of visual quality considers many elements that establish the character of the scene. These include topography and the shape of the land, existing vegetation, structural elements, open spaces, color, light and texture among other physical factors. In addition, the alteration or disturbance of the existing landscape over time is to be considered. Finally, changes resulting from a proposed action or series of actions are to be evaluated. Aspects of community character or what a community appears to represent or signify to the observer result from the interplay of the physical elements that lead to the judgment of visual quality.

Visual quality and the aesthetic value of a given location either as it exists or may exist in the future is also a subjective judgment by the observer. The standards for determining the significance of visual impact from development are based on professional judgments and commonly accepted planning and design principles as generally expressed in the CEQA Guidelines. A development project would normally have a significant adverse visual impact if the project would:

- **Impact Criterion #1:** Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista.
- **Impact Criterion #2:** Substantially alter the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings.
- **Impact Criterion #3:** Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.
- **Impact Criterion #4:** Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area.

Visual impact would be measured by the amount of visual change adversely affecting an area's perceived aesthetic value or conditions of the setting. A highly visible change resulting from constructing a project that is incompatible with the setting or is not pleasing to look at would contribute to generating a significant adverse visual impact because it would degrade the existing visual character

or quality of the site and its surroundings (Impact Criterion #2). Factors to be considered include the physical layout of constructed elements with respect to each other and existing structures, the open and closed spaces so defined between structural elements, the density or intensity of development, scale relationships between existing and proposed structures, site landscaping design, physical linkages for pedestrians and vehicles, and other features of development. For example, significant differences in building mass or form, or lack of open space transitions between the constructed and natural environment would be expected to generate adverse visual impacts under normal circumstances.

Project Evaluation

In considering the visual impact of implementing the 901 Sherman Avenue project, viewpoint location with respect to the project site would influence visual impact perception. The elements of building height, color, density of building placement, open space, lighting, paving design and associated pedestrian amenities would have the greatest visual influence from close-in viewpoints. As the observer moves away from the site, specific details regarding the physical elements of the project would become less important in defining visual impact, while building mass and view corridors would remain of importance.

Scenic Vistas: *Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? (Impact Criterion #1)*

Project Appearances and Photomontage Preparation

Project implementation would result in 1) removal (demolition) of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings, 2) relocation and renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building on a new foundation, 3) construction of a public plaza on the north and east sides the building with a connecting passageway to the Annex (see Figure 2-4) and 4), installation of the Civic Green and decorative plant materials. These actions combined would form the project and, accordingly, change visual conditions on the project site at the Civic Center.

The project in its completed form would continue to be most visible to motorists and pedestrians traveling westbound DeLong Avenue and along Sherman Avenue. The south face of 901 Sherman Avenue would also be visible to eastbound DeLong Avenue pedestrians and motorists, but because of building location and orientation (the building front faces Sherman Avenue) would not be as important to defining visual conditions of the project site as would occur along westbound DeLong Avenue.

To illustrate the general appearance of the 901 Sherman Avenue project in its completed form, photomontages from two vantage points have been prepared as shown on Figures 3.3-5 through 3.3-8. The photomontage viewpoint locations are as indicated on Figure 3.3-1, Photograph Location Map.



Before Project



After Project



Before Project



After Project



FIGURE 3.3-8
View of Project Site at Sherman Avenue

D41375.00

A photomontage is a photograph with an image of a project accurately superimposed over the photograph through the use of computer imaging techniques. In this case, “photo-realistic” images of the project have been constructed as the project would appear when completed. Building colors, window frames, ornamentation and textures have been rendered based on conditions of the 901 Sherman Avenue structure as it exists today to give an accurate indication of future appearances. The intent is to show building location and other adjoining spatial elements as would exist with project completion.

First, from each photomontage location, a photograph of the site as it exists today is shown (Figures 3.3-5 and 3.3-7). Second, from each photomontage location, the project as proposed is shown (Figures 3.3-6 and 3.3-8). The 901 Sherman Avenue building has been relocated 12 feet north of its current position and the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings have been removed in each of the two photomontages. The plaza and Civic Green space as proposed has been constructed with landscaping of trees and shrubs superimposed.

The trees shown adjacent the curb along DeLong and Sherman Avenues are scarlet maples (*Acer rubrum* “Autumn Blaze”), at about six to eight years of growth. Scarlet maples are deciduous trees with scarlet foliage in the fall as shown in the photomontage.²

Prior to preparing the photomontages, field investigations were conducted to determine those locations that would offer important visual exposure of the proposed 901 Sherman Avenue project. The photomontage locations selected include westbound DeLong Avenue and a southwest facing view near the project site on Sherman Avenue. The following points are noted regarding the two subject views as illustrated on the photomontages:

Figures 3.3-5 and 3.3-6 Photomontage: View of Project Site from Westbound DeLong Avenue.

- **Street Setback:** Figure 3.3-5 shows project site conditions as currently exist. Figure 3.3-6 indicates moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building 12 feet north of its existing location would create a greater space between the building and the DeLong Avenue curb line than currently exists. Building relocation is desired to increase space between the building and the north edge of DeLong Avenue. The existing on-street parking along the north side of DeLong Avenue between Sherman Avenue and Machin Avenue would be replaced with a second westbound travel lane as a result of the Whole Foods project being constructed on the west side of Railroad Avenue, east of the Civic Center.
- **Pedestrian Environment:** Building relocation would also provide adequate space for new sidewalk construction to enhance pedestrian movement, allow for pedestrian access to the building from the DeLong Avenue frontage and provide space for ground cover material between the sidewalk and building, thus enhancing the pedestrian environment and improving safety. Adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue would match an existing bulb-out at the northeast corner of the intersection, augmenting the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue. The removal of parking along westbound DeLong Avenue would be an improvement in visual conditions as the

absence of parking would avoid parked vehicles interfering with views to 901 Sherman Avenue from surrounding locations.

- **Architectural Appearance:** With project completion, the 901 Sherman Avenue building would remain in the prominently visible location it currently occupies. In the effort to retain the building's eligibility for registration as a historic resource under the National Historic Preservation Act and California Register of Historical Resources, the architectural integrity and outward features of the building that make it eligible for such listings would be retained as illustrated in the photomontage. The colors of the building and window shape and trim would remain as exists today. A new roof would be installed with the surface material consisting of cement fiber photo sensitive (photovoltaic) tiles for generating electricity placed on the south and southeast facing roof surfaces and cement fiber slate shingles of similar dimension and appearance placed on the north facing roof surface. The pitch of the roof would not be changed. Overall, the exterior architectural integrity and appearance of the 901 Sherman Avenue building would be retained (see also Section 3.1 of this EIR, Cultural Resources, for a discussion of the need to retain architectural appearances and historic resource preservation). The 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue structures would no longer be within the field of view; the plaza and Civic Green would occupy much of the area where the buildings now exist.
- **Open Space, Views, Landscaping:** Removal of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would create more open space at the Civic Center, and tend to relieve building crowding on the project site. There would be no blockage of important views as a result of the project. From the viewpoint location shown, views in the direction of Mt. Burdell and adjacent hillsides as currently screened by existing vegetation would not be substantially altered. Existing views in the project area, including those of Mt. Burdell and adjacent hillsides would remain. The installation of landscaping as shown on Figure 3.3-6 would round out project construction as proposed, improve visual appearances and enhance the pedestrian environment through the provision of seasonal interest in texture, form and color as foreground elements to the building in its relocated position and surrounding public plaza environment. The street trees as proposed would surround and enclose the building, thus emphasizing its importance within the existing setting.
- **Visibility, Small Town Character:** Considering the above, with project completion, the 901 Sherman Avenue building would continue to remain highly visible in its setting, and continue to provide a sense of arrival to the downtown. The building would remain the principal structure to be seen by westbound motorists and pedestrians entering the City via DeLong Avenue. Due to lack of building alteration from an architectural standpoint, the building's outward appearance with ascending steeple would continue to symbolize and reinforce the small town community character of Novato.

Figures 3.3-7 and 3.3-8 Photomontage: View of Project Site at Sherman Avenue.

The discussion above regarding Figure 3.3-5 and photomontage Figure 3.3-6 would generally apply to Figure 3.3-7 and photomontage Figure 3.3-8. Figures 3.3-7 and 3.3-8 provide a close in view of the

project site in a southwest direction as would be seen from southbound Sherman Avenue, and to a similar degree, northbound Sherman Avenue.

Overall, the Civic Green would be more visible from the viewpoint location shown on Figure 3.3-8 due to the Civic Green's close proximity to Sherman Avenue. Construction of the public plaza and Civic Green would be possible because of the removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. With project completion, a decorative wood arbor would be constructed immediately to the west of the Civic Green which would substitute for the existing buildings as a screen to the Civic Center parking area. The use of vines as part of landscape development to cover the arbor would provide color and texture and serve to reinforce the arbor as a screen, thus enhancing visual conditions adjacent to the Civic Green and plaza.

As indicated in the photomontages, removal of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would affect visual conditions in the project area. With the removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, 901 Sherman Avenue would assume greater visual importance as a landmark at the DeLong Avenue entry to Novato because there would be no building forms in close proximity to compete for visual attention from the viewpoint locations shown. The removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would also create open space on the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue, thus providing adequate area for the installation of site landscaping, the public plaza and Civic Green. As indicated in the discussion regarding views from westbound DeLong Avenue, the installation of landscaping as shown on Figure 3.3-8 would round out project construction as proposed, enhance the pedestrian environment and improve appearances through the provision of seasonal interest in texture, form and color as foreground elements to the building in its relocated position.

Based on this analysis, as supported through the photo-realistic photomontages provided, it is considered that the project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista under Impact Criterion #1 and no mitigation would be required.

Visual Character and Appearances: *Would the project substantially alter the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? (Impact Criterion #2)*

Impact 3.3-1

Relocating 901 Sherman Avenue up to 12 feet north of its current location and demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would disrupt the existing visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape. This would be a significant and unavoidable impact.

Although 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue are currently unoccupied and there is little pedestrian activity in the area due to lack of daily building use, the three structures share a visual and historical association with other buildings that front Sherman Avenue on both sides of the street including 900, 908 and 917 Sherman Avenue. The historic streetscape, as an element of the Historic (H) Overlay District, is defined and characterized by the physical arrangement of the buildings that front Sherman Avenue.

Relocating 901 Sherman Avenue and demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would alter the physical arrangements of buildings along the street, resulting in an increase in open space on the project site. While 901 Sherman Avenue would not be altered in size or otherwise modified to adversely affect scale relationships between the existing buildings proposed to remain at the Civic Center, the historic visual association and scale relationships between 901 Sherman and these remaining structures would be weakened with the increase in open space. The increase in open space is considered to negatively impact the existing visual integrity and historic appearance of the Sherman Avenue streetscape. This impact is significant and unavoidable since the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would permanently remove these structures as contributing elements of the visual integrity and historic appearance of the Sherman Avenue streetscape.

Project landscaping would enhance the appearance of the Sherman Avenue streetscape and pedestrian environment through the addition of color, texture, and shade. However, these features of the project would represent a departure from existing conditions, which afford unobstructed views of 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue due to the lack of existing plant materials. While the project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings under Impact Criterion #2, a significant and unavoidable impact would occur as a result of the changes to the historic streetscape appearance as a result of the project.

Mitigation Measure 3.3-1

No mitigation measure is available to reduce Impact 3.3-1 regarding alteration of the streetscape to a less than significant level.

Impact 3.3-2

Project demolition, construction and renovation would require site grading, construction materials stockpiling and storage, and the use of construction equipment in varying intensity as the various phases of the renovation project occur. As a change from current site conditions during periods of demolition and renovation, this is considered a potentially significant visual impact. This demolition and materials storage impact would be localized and short-term however, lasting during the period of project implementation on the project site.

Mitigation Measure 3.3-2

The storage of machines and equipment and stockpiling of construction materials prior to use shall be minimized to reduce visual exposure to the extent practicable. All construction staging areas shall be located internal to the project site and away from DeLong Avenue and as close to or within the area of demolition and construction as possible, out of the way of community traffic and pedestrian use. Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 would reduce Impact 3.3-2 to a less than significant level under Impact Criterion #2 regarding degrading existing visual character.

Scenic Resources: *Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to trees, rock outcroppings and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? (Impact Criterion #3)*

There are no state designated scenic highways in the project area. State Highway 37 east of U.S. 101 which originates several miles southeast of the project site is listed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as an Eligible State Scenic Highway, Not Officially Designated. While 901 Sherman Avenue is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places no scenic highways are in the vicinity of the project site and therefore the project site is not visible from a state scenic highway. Therefore, no adverse impact is identified under Impact Criterion #3 regarding damaging scenic resources within a state scenic highway and no mitigation would be required.

Project Lighting: *Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? (Impact Criterion #4)*

As noted in the discussion of the Setting above, standard City “Cobra” street lights are located along DeLong and Sherman Avenues to provide nighttime illumination and enhance safety. Additional cobra lighting is provided throughout the greater local street network and within the Civic Center parking area. Decorative street lighting has been provided in the City’s downtown area along Grant Avenue as part of downtown redevelopment.

Lighting as a result of the project would not substantially alter exterior light intensities or increase glare. This is because the street light regime would remain as it is today. Exterior lighting provided as part of the project would include decorative lighting features within the new pedestrian plaza surrounding the building and Civic Green to illuminate walkways and steps for pedestrian safety. 901 Sherman Avenue is currently illuminated by exterior up-lights. 901 Sherman Avenue will continue to have up-lighting. Baffles will be used to prevent glare. Interior lighting levels of the building would be sufficient for nighttime use, consistent with past use of the structure at the Civic Center. Exterior surface building materials would be equal in appearance to those used to construct the building originally in order to preserve the historical significance, architectural integrity and history of the building.

Window location would remain as it is today and there would be no new large plate glass window additions or changes in fenestration to significantly reflect sunlight. There would be no substantial change in vehicle circulation that could otherwise draw headlights in to nearby residential living spaces as a result of the project. Therefore, the project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare under Impact Criterion #4 that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the Civic Center area and no mitigation would be required.

Cumulative Development

The context for the analysis of cumulative aesthetic impacts is the City of Novato, focusing on the Civic Center and downtown area within the Historic (H) Overlay District where the project site is located. As noted under Impact 3.3-1, the significant and unavoidable aesthetic (visual quality) impact

resulting from the project concerns disruption of the existing visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape. Currently, there are no known proposals to substantially alter or demolish other contributing buildings along Sherman Avenue or within the larger Historic (H) Overlay District. However, considering the past removal of other contributing building(s) within the Historic (H) Overlay District and the potential for future removal or loss of contributing buildings within the District, Impact 3.3-1 is considered to be a cumulative impact contributing to the loss of the visual integrity of the historic streetscapes within the Historic (H) Overlay District.

Endnotes — Aesthetics

- ¹ *Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Project*, prepared by the Redevelopment Agency of the city of Novato, June, 1999.
- ² Landscape scheme provided by Interactive Resources/Vallier Design Associates, *901 Sherman Avenue Renovation, Planting Plan*, Sheet L3.1

Section 4

Growth Inducement

4.1 GROWTH INDUCEMENT

Introduction

Section 15126.2(d) of the *CEQA Guidelines* requires the following review of growth inducement in an EIR:

“Discuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth. Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities, requiring construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects. Also, discuss the characteristic of some projects which may encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.”¹

In summary, CEQA requires a discussion of how a project could increase population, employment, or housing growth in surrounding areas and the impacts resulting from this growth. CEQA Guidelines indicate that a project would normally have a significant effect on the environment if it would induce substantial growth or a substantial concentration of population. This section of the EIR discusses the relationship of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project and growth.

Growth Defined

When CEQA refers to *growth inducement*, CEQA means *all growth – direct or indirect*. Growth can be induced in a number of ways, including increases in employment, population, and housing, through the elimination of obstacles to growth, or through the stimulation of economic activity within a region.

Direct growth potential occurs on a project site and within the facilities to be constructed such as a commercial facility that would attract shoppers from other locations or a housing development that would accommodate an increase in population. Indirect growth potential occurs beyond the project site but is stimulated by a proposed project’s direct growth. Such growth is tied to increased direct and indirect investment and spending by residents, employees, and businesses. Indirect growth stems from the “induced” employment generated by the economic activity resulting from a project. Indirect employment is generated by a direct increase in economic activity. It is due to the increases in spending that would occur on the part of the businesses, employees, and employee households related to an increase in direct economic activity. It is also due to the additional spending that would occur on the part of suppliers of the goods and services demanded by a project’s direct economic activity (primary and secondary households, businesses and employees). Production, employment, and

households would increase with each new round of spending, but at a decreasing rate with each additional round.

Project Evaluation

Labor

Project Employment: The project would not be a major employer in the community, and thus would not lead to an increase in population as a result of increased employment. Routine cleaning and maintenance activities or use of support facilities contained in the Annex such as the caterer's room would be anticipated on a continuing basis using local businesses after project completion, as was the case prior to discontinuing use of the existing buildings at the Civic Center. City employees who would use the building in support of meetings conducted by the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Commission and other City boards and commissions, and programs sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department or other City Departments would be current City employees, also reflective of prior activities conducted at the Civic Center. Therefore, no significant growth inducements would be expected through employment or employee activities as a result of project operations.

Project Construction: Project demolition, construction and renovation would generate jobs in the construction, materials fabrication, and supply industries for up to an estimated six months until the time of demolition, construction and renovation completion. Demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would take about three days. It is estimated that five to ten workers (construction, finishing, materials providers, and/or equipment operators) maximum would be working on the site at any given moment. The provision of construction jobs would create an indirect and insignificant demand for goods and related services at the local level due to the low numbers of personnel that would be employed at the project site.

Expenditures for construction and by construction workers would indirectly and insignificantly stimulate employment and sales in the City of Novato and the surrounding areas during the construction period. Given the limited construction period and relatively standard nature of the construction work, it is not expected that appreciable numbers of people would establish primary residence in Novato or that significant new businesses would be created as a result of project construction activities. Also, given the limited project site consisting of several parcels as compared to the overall extent of construction activity within the regional economy as a whole, project construction would be expected to employ construction workers already living and working in the Bay Area. As with all economic activity, including construction work, some of the demand for products and services would be met by firms outside of the local economy. In view of the above, no significant labor pool from outside the Bay Area would be expected to temporarily or permanently relocate or commute long distances as a result of implementing the proposed project, and no growth inducing impacts are identified as a result of project construction.

Population

As indicated above, any population growth as a result of project construction would be less than significant due to the relatively small size of the project compared to the construction industry in the Novato area as a whole.

Utilities and Public Services

The analysis of impacts of implementing the proposed project in the *Initial Study of Environmental Impact* (Appendix A of this EIR) finds the project would not significantly increase the use of water or contribute to cumulative demands on the water supply, wastewater treatment, solid waste disposal, natural gas resources, or public services including police, fire, schools, and recreation or require the expansion of utilities and public service facilities that would encourage regional growth.²

Infrastructure

Growth in a geographic area may be induced by removing infrastructure barriers through the provision of new infrastructure and/or improving transportation and circulation systems. Accordingly, the growth-inducing potential of the proposed project would be significant if the resulting infrastructure improvements required to serve the project significantly exceeded the capacity to accommodate growth above and beyond what is envisioned under the Novato General Plan. However, the project site is within a developed urban area on the eastern edge of Novato surrounded by commercial, office and residential land uses and there would be no new infrastructure systems or transportation projects such as new roads needed to serve the project site which is already served with infrastructure and transportation facilities. Therefore, there would be no growth inducements resulting from the project through the removal of infrastructure barriers.

In conclusion, no growth inducements or growth inducing impacts are identified for the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project.

Endnotes – Growth Inducement

¹ California Office of Planning and Research, *CEQA – California Environmental Quality Act – Statutes and Guidelines*, as amended December 1, 2001.

² City of Novato, 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project, *Initial Study of Environmental Impact (Environmental Checklist Form)*, December 2007, prepared by PBS&J. This document is on file and available for public inspection at the offices of the Novato Community Development Department, 75 Rowland Way #200, Novato, CA 94945.

Section 5

Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

5.1 UNAVOIDABLE SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE IMPACTS

In accordance with Section 15126.2(b) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, this section is to set forth those significant environmental adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated to a less than significant level that would result from implementation of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project.

CEQA requires the decision-maker (Lead Agency), to balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks in determining whether to approve a project. Where a decision on a project allows the occurrence of significant effects that are identified in an EIR but are not at least substantially mitigated, the Lead Agency is to state in writing through a Statement of Overriding Considerations the specific reasons to support its action based on the EIR and/or other information in the record. If a Lead Agency makes a Statement of Overriding Considerations, the Statement should be included in the record of the project approval.¹

For the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project as addressed in this EIR, the unavoidable and significant environmental impacts that would result from the project as proposed that cannot be reduced to less than significant levels include 1) the loss of historical resources through demolition of the structures at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue.

The unavoidable significant impacts are more closely described with respect to each Impact Criterion as follows:

Cultural Resources

Historical Resource Significance: *Would the project cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?*

Impact 3.1-2

The demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource. This would be a significant and unavoidable adverse impact.

Cumulative Development

The cumulative context for historic resources would revolve around resources in the Historic (H) Overlay District. The proposed project, in combination with future projects in the Historic (H) Overlay District, could result in adverse effects to historical resources and the historic context of the Overlay District. This is considered a significant and unavoidable impact.

The Historic (H) Overlay District includes buildings associated with the early development of Novato. Nearly half of those buildings have been identified in a preliminary eligibility evaluation as contributors to a potential historic district.² Again, the Historic (H) Overlay District is a zoning mechanism specifying the permit requirements and development standards applicable to buildings and parcels lying within the District boundaries. In the last few years several buildings within the Overlay District have been removed for various projects, and future development within the Overlay District could also result in the loss of individually significant historical resources, as well as contributors to a potential historic district, although no formal evaluation of a historic district has been undertaken. Because all historical resources are unique and non-renewable members of finite classes, all adverse effects or negative impacts, such as demolition, erode a dwindling resource base. Although federal, state, and local laws aim to protect historical resources, it is not always feasible to protect historical resources, particularly when preservation in place would frustrate the implementation of development projects. The loss of historical resources from past and future development within the Overlay District is a significant cumulative impact.

The proposed project includes the demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, both of which have been identified as contributors to a potential historic district in accordance with CEQA criteria. Loss of these buildings could impair eligibility of a potential historic district to ultimately be listed in the National Register of Historic Places or California Register of Historic Resources. As such, the project's incremental contribution to cumulative effects on historical resources within the Historic (H) Overlay District, specifically the removal of contributors to a potential historic district, would therefore be cumulatively considerable and would constitute a significant cumulative impact.

The implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-2 as noted earlier in this EIR would reduce the magnitude of the cumulative impact by preserving a written and photographic record of the buildings; however, because demolition would permanently remove the historical resources, the cumulative impact would be significant and unavoidable.

Aesthetics

Visual Character and Appearances: *Would the project substantially alter the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? (Impact Criterion #2)*

Impact 3.3-1

Relocating 901 Sherman Avenue up to 12 feet north of its current location and demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would disrupt the existing visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape. This would be a significant and unavoidable impact.

Cumulative Development

The context for the analysis of cumulative aesthetic impacts is the City of Novato, focusing on the Civic Center and downtown area within the Novato Downtown Historic District where the project site is located. As noted under Impact 3.3-1, the significant and unavoidable aesthetic (visual quality)

impact resulting from the project concerns disruption of the existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue . Currently, there are no known proposals to substantially alter or demolish other contributing buildings along Sherman Avenue or within the larger Historic (H) Overlay District. However, considering the past removal of other contributing building(s) within the Historic (H) Overlay District, as well as the potential for future removal or loss of contributing buildings within the District, Impact 3.3-1 would be considered a cumulative d impact contributing to the loss of the visual integrity of the historic streetscapes within the Historic (H) Overlay District.

Endnotes — Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts

¹ 14 California Code of Regulations Section 15000, *et seq.*

² PBS&J, *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Historic (H) Overlay District*, February, 2008, page 10.

Section 6 Alternatives

INTRODUCTION

The analysis of alternatives is an important element of an EIR and is necessary to ensure that a range of options is examined, thus providing an understanding of the effects of full project implementation, partial project implementation, or no project. This section of the EIR describes and evaluates alternatives to the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project as proposed including the No-Project alternative as required under CEQA.

The purpose of the discussion of alternatives in an EIR is to focus on project solutions which may be capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant environmental effects of a project, even if those alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly.¹

The range of alternatives is to include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects.² Among the factors that may be taken into account when addressing the feasibility of alternatives for inclusion in an EIR are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, or other plans or regulatory limitations, including jurisdictional boundaries.³ An EIR should include sufficient information about a range of reasonable alternatives to allow a meaningful evaluation, analysis and comparison with the project as proposed. The significant effects of the alternatives are to be discussed, but in less detail than the significant effects of the project as proposed.

As noted in Section 5 of this EIR, *Unavoidable Significant Adverse Impacts*, the unavoidable and significant environmental impacts that would result from the project as proposed that cannot be reduced to less than significant levels include 1) the loss of historical resources through demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, and 2) disruption of the existing visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue due to the demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue.

Other identified significant and/or potentially significant impacts respecting other technical subject areas as addressed in this EIR (e.g., *Cultural Resources*, *Aesthetics*) can be mitigated to less than significant levels as indicated in the individual technical sections of this EIR. This includes mitigating potential physical impairment of the 901 Sherman Avenue building during renovation and mitigating visual disruption during the project site demolition and construction period.

Accordingly, the range of alternatives presented in this section of the EIR explores alternative project development scenarios that may offer less involved, less costly or more effective means of mitigating the identified significant and/or potentially significant impacts to less than significant levels. The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project alternatives include the following:

- No Project
- 905 and 911 Relocation Within the Historic Overlay District
- 905 and 911 Relocation Outside the Historic Overlay District
- 905 Relocation Only
- 905 Demolition Only
- 901 Renovation in Place and 905 and 911 Demolition
- 901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911
- Environmentally Superior Alternative

As indicated in Section 2 of this EIR, *Project Description*, the project objectives are as follows:

- To renovate and restore the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue; and
- To provide a public plaza and 4,000 to 7,000 sq. ft. of Civic Green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in support of the public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue.

These objectives are to be kept in focus in the evaluation of project alternatives.

6.1 NO PROJECT

Under the No Project alternative, there would be no 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project at this time. There would be no relocation or renovation of the structure at 901 Sherman Avenue, nor would there be construction of a plaza or Civic Green adjacent to the building available for community use. None of the objectives of the project as stated would be realized. There would also be no demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings identified as historical resources under CEQA and consequently none of the significant unavoidable impacts regarding historical resources would occur as a result of the project.

That portion of the Civic Center where the project site is located would continue to remain unused. There would be no building renovation on the project site and the public as well as the City Council and various City Commissions would not have the site available for use as a public venue as has historically been the case. Property owned by the City would continue to yield no specific benefit to residents and businesses as a whole. Without routine maintenance, the historic building at 901 Sherman Avenue could weather and deteriorate, adversely affecting its historical resource value.

In sum, the No Project alternative would not allow City officials to focus on revitalizing a portion of the former Civic Center and returning some government services and community oriented activities to downtown Novato. The City Council's goal is to renovate 901 Sherman as a City Council Chamber and community event venue. This desire would not be fulfilled under the No Project alternative.

6.2 905 AND 911 RELOCATION WITHIN THE HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT

The project as proposed calls for demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to allow space for the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved approximately 10 to 12 feet north of DeLong Avenue, and allow for development of the public plaza and Civic Green adjacent to the relocated building. Other buildings at the Civic Center, including 917 Sherman Avenue and the Community House, would not be disturbed and would remain in place with the exception of removal and reconstruction of a portion of the connecting passageway between the 1950 Annex and 901 Sherman Avenue (see Section 2, *Project Description* for additional information regarding the existing buildings).

In lieu of demolition, this alternative focuses on the potential relocation of 905 Sherman Avenue to a City owned parcel at 900 Sherman Avenue (see Figure 6-1 for site location), and relocation of 911 Sherman Avenue to an adjacent City owned parcel at 917 Sherman Avenue. Under this alternative 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would not be demolished; 905 Sherman Avenue would be moved and placed to the immediate north of 900 Sherman Avenue, between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue, and 911 Sherman Avenue would be moved and placed to the immediate west of 917 Sherman Avenue.

It is important to note at the outset, all buildings are located within the Novato Historic (H) Overlay District (District) and listed as historic buildings in the Downtown Specific Plan. The District itself has not been evaluated for California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR) or National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility, although the Historic District Survey Report prepared for the project and used in the preparation of this EIR provides a preliminary review and recommendation of the District's CRHR eligibility. It was noted the District could be eligible for the listing on the CRHR. Because all five properties under this alternative involve existing buildings, the following summarizes the current status of each. All structures are of light wood frame construction, and are no longer used for City office space.

- **905 Sherman Avenue:** As noted previously, 905 Sherman Avenue, known as the manse, was constructed in 1918 as a residence for the pastor and his family and stands immediately to the north of 901 Sherman Avenue. The single-story manse was eventually converted to a church office and then for use as the City of Novato Police Station. The building was last used for the offices of the Novato Financial Division. The building has a sloped composition shingle roof and exterior wood shingle siding. The building has been found ineligible for individual listing on either the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources.⁴ However, the building is locally listed as a historic building in the Downtown Specific Plan and located within the Novato Historic (H) Overlay District.
- **911 Sherman Avenue:** The one and one-half story building at 911 Sherman Avenue, known as the Morrison House, was constructed as a residence in about 1916. The City used the house as a Police Station annex which was physically connected to the Police Station at 905 Sherman Avenue. The building was last used as the offices of the Novato Code Enforcement Division. The 911 Sherman Avenue building has a sloped composition shingle roof and exterior wood shingle siding. The building has been found ineligible for individual listing on either the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources.⁵



FIGURE 6-1

Sherman Avenue Buildings-Alternative 6.1, 905 and 911 Relocation within Historic Overlay District

Source: PBS&J, 2007.



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However, the building is locally listed as a historic building within the Novato Historic (H) Overlay District.

- **917 Sherman Avenue:** The building at 917 Sherman Avenue appears to have been originally constructed as a two-story residence. The building was last used as the offices of the Novato Parks and Recreation Department. The building has a sloped composition shingle roof and exterior wood siding. The building has not been evaluated for individual listing on either the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. The building is locally listed as a historic building in the Downtown Specific Plan and located within the Historic (H) Overlay District.
- **900 Sherman Avenue:** This building is located at the northeast corner of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue. The building appears to have been originally constructed as a single-story residence. Prior to its current vacancy the building was used for City administration offices, including offices of the City Manager. The building has a sloped composition shingle roof, exterior wood cladding and a covered porch that wraps around the front building face. The building has not been evaluated for individual listing on either the National Register of Historic Places or the California Register of Historical Resources. The building is locally listed as a historic building in the Downtown Specific Plan and located within the Historic (H) Overlay District.

As noted in Section 1 of this EIR, *Introduction*, CEQA considers a building an “historical resource” if it is a resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code, in which case the resource is presumed to be historically or culturally significant.⁶ All four buildings that would be affected by this alternative are locally listed as historic buildings in the Downtown Specific Plan and located within the Historic (H) Overlay District as indicated above and therefore must be treated as historical resources under CEQA unless the preponderance of evidence demonstrates that either is not historically or culturally significant. Further a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.

As noted above, under this alternative, 905 Sherman Avenue would be moved from its current location and placed between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue. Also, 911 Sherman Avenue would be moved from its current location and placed on the west side of 917 Sherman Avenue adjacent to the City parking lot.

Regarding moving 905 Sherman Avenue, based on survey map data and field measurements, there is approximately 48-feet of undeveloped space between the buildings at 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue in which to place the structure.⁷ Measurements also show the 905 Sherman Avenue building has a width of about 30-feet and a depth of about 56-feet indicating the building would fit between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue. This action would however require the removal of six non-heritage trees, a small turf area and various ornamental shrubs, the removal of a concrete ADA accessible ramp on the north

side of 900 Sherman Avenue, and the construction of a new foundation including appurtenant grading and drainage improvements (e.g., roof leaders, splash blocks and foundation drains). Given the distance between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue with 905 Sherman Avenue in its relocated position between the two buildings, exterior building upgrades would be needed to provide the appropriate fire safety measures (e.g., fire rated walls, siding and windows). The relocation of underground utilities of water, sewer, cable, telephone, gas and electric lines would also be required.

Moving 911 Sherman Avenue to the west side of 917 Sherman Avenue may require the removal of one existing heritage oak tree (trunk diameter greater than 24-inches), and would require the loss of about five parking stalls on Cain Lane and seven stalls in the Civic Center parking lot. Additional parking could be lost depending on how the building is sited. For example, if a setback from Cain Lane is desired, more parking stalls in the Civic Center parking lot would need to be removed to accommodate an appropriate drive aisle turning radius. Site grading possibly including retaining wall construction would be necessary to deal with an approximate three-foot grade change from the Civic Center parking lot to the tot play area behind 917 Sherman Avenue. Building relocation would also require the construction of a new foundation including appurtenant grading and drainage improvements (e.g., roof leaders, splash blocks and foundation drains), and depending on the separation between 911 and 917 Sherman Avenue, exterior wall/window upgrades may be needed for fire safety. If 911 Sherman Avenue were to be located further away (west) from 917 Sherman Avenue to avoid fire code upgrades, then the city would lose more parking stalls in the Civic Center parking lot and along Cain Lane.

While this alternative would not require the demolition of a locally historic structure, and would minimize the loss of contributing buildings within the Historic (H) Overlay District, this alternative would significantly alter the setting of the 901, 905, 911, 917, 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue buildings and would destroy the associative link between 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Further, positioning the 900, 905 and 908 Sherman Avenue buildings as a closely spaced group would not represent land use and visual conditions as historically existed within the district. Locating 911 Sherman Avenue to the west of 917 Sherman Avenue would eliminate the building's historic street frontage orientation and exposure.

This alternative would still require a Statement of Overriding Considerations under CEQA and is not considered practical from the standpoint of preserving the setting of the six buildings or the historic association the buildings as a group share. This alternative would also be more costly than the project as proposed.

6.3 905 AND 911 RELOCATION OUTSIDE THE HISTORIC OVERLAY DISTRICT

This alternative calls for the relocation of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to a location(s) outside of the City's Historic (H) Overlay District. This action is envisioned as being undertaken by a private party and not the City, with the private party taking possession of the two buildings and relocating them to an unspecified location. This alternative would allow sufficient room to relocate the 901 Sherman Avenue building and construct the public plaza and Civic Green.

This alternative would be less costly to the City than relocating 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue within the Historic (H) Overlay District, which would be a City undertaking. This alternative under the efforts of a private party would require the City to advertise the two buildings as available for purchase. It should be noted at this time that no alternative sites have been identified where the buildings could be relocated, although it would be reasonable to conclude the available property exists in the Novato area.

The Downtown Novato Specific Plan identifies 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue as “Downtown Novato Historical buildings” within the Historic Overlay District designated by the City of Novato.⁸ While this alternative would potentially retain 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue for the benefit of others, their removal from the historic district would invalidate their historic status as elements of the historic district. The number of locally designated historic buildings within the historic district would be reduced, the association of 905 Sherman Avenue as the manse would be lost, and the context of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would be lost. While this alternative would not eliminate the potential eligibility of the District for listing on the NRHP or CRHR as a whole, this would be a significant impact under CEQA requiring a Statement of Overriding conditions because CEQA considers a building a “historical resource” if it is a resource included in a local register of historical resources, as defined in Section 5020.1(k) of the Public Resources Code or identified as significant in an historical resource survey meeting the requirements of Section 5024.1(g) of the Public Resources Code. Also, this alternative would disrupt the existing visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape through removal of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings.

The potential implementation of this alternative is relatively speculative. Success would depend on discovering a willing participant and local real estate conditions. This alternative would not reduce, avoid or substantially lessen any significant environmental effects of the project as proposed and no advantage of implementing this alternative is identified from an environmental standpoint. However, if successfully implemented, this alternative would allow for the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project to move forward as planned, thus fulfilling the project objectives. Although the impact would be significant under this alternative, unlike the previous alternative, this alternative would not require demolition of the two structures and the buildings could be preserved for future use. Therefore, this alternative is not considered infeasible, pending a private party could be found for building relocation. Under this alternative, the City could assure that the buildings would be rehabilitated to the appropriate standards by placing restrictions in a transfer agreement. If the buildings were altered beyond recognition this would also constitute a substantial adverse change to a historical resource and, therefore, a significant impact on the environment.

6.4 905 RELOCATION ONLY

This alternative would relocate 905 Sherman Avenue to either between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue or to the west side of 917 Sherman Avenue. The building at 911 Sherman Avenue would remain in its current location and would not be relocated (see Figure 6-2).



FIGURE 6-2
Sherman Avenue Buildings-Alternative 6.4, 905 Relocation Only

Source: PBS&J, 2007.

As noted previously, the project as proposed calls for demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to allow space for the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved approximately 10 to 12 feet north of DeLong Avenue, and allow for development of the public plaza and Civic Green adjacent to the relocated building. Under this alternative, only the building adjacent 901 Sherman Avenue would be relocated.

This alternative would be similar to Alternative 6.2 that relocates 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue within the Historic District. Although this alternative would move one building instead of two, this alternative would nonetheless entail the same impacts as discussed under Alternative 6.2. Assuming this alternative was to move forward, none of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the project would be reduced to a less than significant level. The impact of materially impairing a historic resource would not be mitigated.

Under this alternative, if 905 Sherman Avenue were relocated to between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue, the 911 Sherman Avenue building would remain in place. This could limit the amount of space planned for creation of a meaningfully sized plaza and Civic Green space on the north side of the 901 Sherman Avenue building (see the Figure 2-4, *Schematic Landscape Plan*, in Section 2, Project Description, for the proposed project design), which is an objective of the project in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. No significant advantage from an environmental standpoint is identified for this alternative.

However, since this alternative involves the loss of only one building in the Historic (H) Overlay District, the impacts related to loss of cultural resources and disruption of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be slightly reduced in magnitude than the project as proposed.

6.5 905 DEMOLITION ONLY

This alternative would demolish the 905 Sherman Avenue building only, rather than demolishing both the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings. The building at 911 Sherman Avenue would remain in its current location and would not be relocated. This alternative would be similar to alternative 6.4 addressed above to the extent the building at 911 Sherman Avenue would remain in its current location and would not be relocated or demolished.

Again, it is important to note, the project as proposed calls for demolition of both the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings to allow space for the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved approximately 10 to 12 feet north of DeLong Avenue, and allow for development of the public plaza and Civic Green. Assuming this alternative was to move forward, none of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the project would be reduced to a less than significant level. The impact of materially impairing a historic resource, namely the demolition of 905 Sherman Avenue, would still occur. Also, under this alternative, as with the previous alternative, it is considered there may not be sufficient room to construct the plaza surrounding the 901 Sherman Avenue building as envisioned for the project as proposed. This alternative could limit the amount of space planned for

creation of a meaningfully sized plaza and Civic Green space on the north side of the 901 Sherman Avenue building which is an objective of the project in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. Loss of the building would still require a Statement of Overriding Considerations under CEQA. However, in considering all the alternatives evaluated above, under this alternative, one structure would be materially impaired of the physical characteristics that justify its inclusion in the Historic (H) Overlay District rather than two or more structures. While the impact of this alternative would also be significant and unavoidable it would lessen the impact to historic resources when compared to the project as proposed because only one locally historic building would be demolished.

6.6 901 RENOVATION IN PLACE AND 905 AND 911 DEMOLITION

This alternative would demolish both 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and the building at 901 Sherman Avenue would be renovated in its current location and would not be relocated.

As noted previously, the project as proposed calls for demolition of the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to allow space for the 901 Sherman Avenue building to be moved approximately 10 to 12 feet north of DeLong Avenue, and allow for development of the public plaza and Civic Green adjacent to the relocated building. Under this alternative, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would be demolished to allow for the development of the public plaza and Civic Green; however, unlike the proposed project, 901 Sherman Avenue would not be relocated. Assuming this alternative was to move forward, the significant impacts identified for the project as related to the exterior renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue would be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-1. It was also noted the relocation of 901 Sherman Avenue on the project site as proposed would not diminish its historic importance because the building's location context would be retained and not substantially altered. The building would occupy about 75 percent of its original footprint location.

However, the impact of materially impairing a historic resource (905 and 911 Sherman Avenue) would not be mitigated. The removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would remain a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations. The visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape would also be lost through the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, resulting in a significant unavoidable impact requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations.

An additional drawback of this alternative has to do with eliminating the proposed building setback from DeLong Avenue. Lifting 901 Sherman Avenue off its foundation and moving the structure north of its current location is proposed to provide a greater setback from vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue. Relocation is desired to increase space between the building and the north edge of DeLong Avenue. The existing on-street parking along the north side of DeLong Avenue between Sherman Avenue and Machin Avenue is planned to be replaced with a second westbound travel lane as a result of the approved Whole Foods mixed-use project being constructed on the west side of Railroad Avenue, east of the Civic Center. Without building relocation and with the planned lane

reconfiguration, vehicle traffic would be within approximately six-feet of the south wall of the 901 Sherman Avenue building were it to remain in its current location, thus raising the issue of reduced pedestrian safety. Further, loss of the setback from DeLong Avenue would maintain the current sense of minimal lot area on which the structure rests.

6.7 901 RENOVATION IN PLACE AND NO DEMOLITION OF 905 AND 911

Under this alternative the project would be redefined to include the renovation of 901 Sherman in place, with no changes to 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue with the public plaza and Civic Green located on the west side of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. All three buildings would remain in place. The building at 901 Sherman Avenue would not be relocated, and the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would not be demolished.

A redesigned public plaza and Civic Green under this alternative could incorporate Blodgett Lane and the area on the west side of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue adjacent to the Civic Center parking lot. The redesigned public plaza and Civic Green would have an area of about 5,700 square feet unless additional space was taken from the tot play area behind 917 Sherman Avenue. However, this option would likely result in the removal of about six parking spaces formerly reserved for City department heads. There also could be the need to remove several parking stalls in the Civic Center parking lot to provide an appropriate turning radius for fire apparatus. A portion of the public plaza and Civic Green would need to be devoted to a staircase and ADA compliant ramp to enter 901 Sherman Avenue.

Compared to the project as proposed, which calls for the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, the significant and unavoidable cultural resource impacts identified for the project would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of the mitigation measures included for the proposed project. All three resources inclusive of 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would remain in place and the project would not materially impair a historic resource. In addition, since no buildings would be demolished, the historic streetscape would be preserved and no visual impact would occur. Therefore, the impacts as identified for the project as proposed would be less than significant under this alternative and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would not be required.

As noted above under alternative 6.6, *901 Renovation in Place*, a drawback of this alternative concerns the lack of a setback from DeLong Avenue. A 10 to 12-foot building setback from DeLong Avenue is proposed to create added distance between vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue and the building. The building setback would increase pedestrian safety. Removal of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings as proposed would also create outdoor public gathering space directly in front of 901 Sherman Avenue in support of the indoor public meeting space to be provided within the building. These design considerations and opportunities to enhance safety, appearances and use of the project site as proposed would not exist under this alternative.

6.8 ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE

As described in Section 3.1 of this EIR, *Cultural Resources*, cultural resources impacts would be considered significant if implementation of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would:

- **Impact Criterion #1:** Cause a substantial change in the significance of an historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.
- **Impact Criterion #2:** Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5.
- **Impact Criterion #3:** Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.
- **Impact Criterion #4:** Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5(b) states that “a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.”

The analysis in this EIR indicated potential impacts under Impact Criteria #2, #3 and #4 can be mitigated to less than significant levels. It was also shown that there would be a significant and unavoidable adverse cultural resource impact under Impact Criterion #1 with the demolition of 905 and/or 911 Sherman Avenue, or relocation of either or both of the buildings. Additionally it was noted the visual integrity of the Sherman Avenue historic streetscape would be lost through the demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Neither of these significant and unavoidable impacts would occur if 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue were not demolished. Therefore, in view of the above, it is concluded the 901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911 Alternative is the Environmentally Superior Alternative. Table 6-1 summarizes the findings of the alternatives analysis.

Table 6.1-1
901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project
Summary of Alternatives Analysis

Alternative	Alternative Description	Impact Description	Impact as Compared to the Proposed Project
Project as Proposed	Project as proposed relocates 901 Sherman and renovates structure; 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue are demolished.	Significant and unavoidable cultural resources impact due to demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and disruption of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.	-NA-
6.1 No Project	There would be no 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project at this time. There would be no relocation or renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue, nor would there be construction of a plaza or Civic Green adjacent to the building available for community use. Project objectives would not be realized.	There would also be no demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings identified as historical resources under CEQA and consequently none of the significant unavoidable impacts regarding historical resources would occur. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would not be required.	Since this alternative would not include the demolition of historic resources, the No Project Alternative would not generate cultural resource and aesthetic impacts.
6.2 905 and 911 Relocation Within Historic Overlay District	Under this alternative, 905 Sherman Avenue would be moved and placed between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue and 911 Sherman Avenue would be moved and placed to the immediate west of 917 Sherman Avenue.	This more costly alternative would significantly alter the setting of the 901, 905, 911, 917, 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue buildings and destroy the associative link between 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. The visual integrity of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would also be lost. This alternative is not considered practical from the standpoint of preserving the setting of the six buildings or the historic association of 901 and 911 Sherman Avenue. There would be a significant and unavoidable adverse impact under Impact Criterion #1 and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.	Given the disruption to the historic setting of all of the buildings fronting Sherman Avenue, this alternative would have significant visual and historic resource impacts similar to those resulting from the proposed project.

Table 6.1-1 (Continued)
901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project
Summary of Alternatives Analysis

Alternative	Alternative Description	Impact Description	Impact as Compared to the Proposed Project
6.3 905 and 911 Relocation Outside Historic Overlay District	This alternative calls for the relocation of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue to a location(s) outside of the City's Historic (H) Overlay District. Action would be undertaken by a private party.	Building removal from the Historic (H) Overlay District would invalidate their status as contributing elements to a potential historic district. The number of locally designated historic buildings within the Historic (H) Overlay District would be reduced. The impact would be significant and unavoidable under Impact Criterion #1 and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.	The impacts of relocating 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue outside the Historic Overlay District would be the same as the demolition of these buildings under the project as proposed. There would be a loss of historic resources and visual integrity and historic appearance of the streetscape along Sherman Avenue.
6.4 905 Relocation Only	This alternative would relocate 905 Sherman Avenue to either between 900 and 908 Sherman Avenue or to the west side of 917 Sherman Avenue. The building at 911 Sherman Avenue would remain in its current location.	This alternative would be similar to Alternative 6.2, except this alternative would move one building instead of two. This alternative would nonetheless entail the same impacts as discussed under Alternative 6.2. Assuming this alternative was to move forward, none of the significant and unavoidable impacts identified for the project would be reduced to a less than significant level. The impact of materially impairing a historic resource would not be mitigated under Impact Criterion #1 and a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.	Since this alternative involves the loss of only one historic building in the Historic Overlay District rather than two, the cultural resource and historic streetscape impacts identified for the proposed project would be reduced, but not significantly reduced. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.
6.5 905 Demolition Only	This alternative would demolish the 905 Sherman Avenue building only, rather than demolishing both the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings.	This alternative would avoid the effort and cost to move the building to another site. Demolition of the building would result in the loss of a contributing element to the historic district and remain a significant and unavoidable impact under CEQA.	As with Alternative 6.4, above, this alternative involves the loss of one historic building in the Historic Overlay District rather than two. As such, the impacts to the District and the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue would be reduced as compared to the project. However, a Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required

Table 6.1-1 (Continued)
901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project
Summary of Alternatives Analysis

Alternative	Alternative Description	Impact Description	Impact as Compared to the Proposed Project
6.6 901 Renovation in Place and 905 and 911 Demolition	This alternative would demolish both 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and the building at 901 Sherman Avenue would be renovated in its current location and would not be relocated.	The removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would remain a significant and unavoidable impact under Impact Criterion #1 requiring a Statement of Overriding Considerations.	This Alternative has the same cultural resource and historic streetscape impacts as described above for the project as proposed. There would be a significant and unavoidable cultural resources impact due to demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue and the disruption of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would be required.
6.7 901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911	Under this alternative, the project would include the renovation of 901 with the public plaza and Civic Green located on the west side of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. The building at 901 Sherman Avenue would not be relocated, and the buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would not be demolished.	This alternative would not materially significantly impair a historic resource or result in any changes to the historic streetscape appearance along Sherman Avenue. This alternative would have a less than significant impact on cultural resources regarding the exterior renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue provided mitigation measure 3.1-1 were implemented. However, this alternative would not provide an improved setback from vehicle traffic at DeLong Avenue, nor would this alternative be likely to provide a meaningfully sized plaza and civic green.	This Alternative does not include the demolition or relocation disturbances under the Proposed Project. Therefore, this Alternative would not have significant and unavoidable cultural resource loss impacts or loss of the historic streetscape. A Statement of Overriding Considerations would not be required.
6.8 Environmentally Superior Alternative	901 Renovation in Place and No Demolition of 905 and 911		It is concluded that Alternative 6.7 is the Environmentally Superior Alternative. Unlike the other alternatives, this alternative would retain all three buildings existing on the project site, thus minimizing the loss of historically contributing buildings within the Historic (H) Overlay District and avoiding disruption of the historic streetscape along Sherman Avenue. However, this alternative would not provide all of the amenities included in the proposed project.

Endnotes – Alternatives

- ¹ State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6 (b).
- ² State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6 (c).
- ³ State CEQA Guidelines, Section 15126.6 (f) (1).
- ⁴ City of Novato, *Historic Resources Evaluation, 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue*, Interactive Resources, Architects & Engineers. April 27, 2007, page 20.
- ⁵ *Historic Resources Evaluation, 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue*, Op. Cit., page 23.
- ⁶ CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (a)(2).
- ⁷ Field measurements taken by Steve Marshall, City of Novato Senior Planner, January 30, 2008.
- ⁸ *Downtown Novato Specific Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on July 14, 1998 by Resolution Numbers 97-98 and 103-98, as amended, Section 2, *Plan Framework and Background*, page 19 of 36.

Section 7

Report Preparation

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Appendix A

Initial Study of Environmental Impact (Environmental Checklist Form)

City of Novato

901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project

Initial Study of Environmental Impact (Environmental Checklist Form)

February 2008

Prepared for:
City of Novato
Department of Community Development
75 Rowland Way, Suite 200
Novato, CA 94595

Prepared by:
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353 Sacramento Street, Suite 1000
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Appendix A: Archaeological Investigations at 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue

City of Novato Initial Study

Environmental Checklist Form

1. **Project Title:** 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project
2. **Lead Agency Name and Address:** City of Novato
Community Development Department
75 Rowland Way, Suite 200
Novato, CA 94595-5037
3. **Contact Person and Phone Number:** Mr. Steve Marshall
Senior Planner
(415) 899-8942
4. **Project Location:** Novato Civic Center
901 Sherman Avenue
Novato, CA 94945-3230
5. **Project Sponsor's Name and Address:** City of Novato
75 Rowland Way, Suite 200
Novato, CA 94595-5037
6. **General Plan Designation:** The project site is located within the Community Facilities (CF) designation as shown on the Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1.
7. **Zoning:** The project site is located within the Community Facilities Primary Zoning District (CF). Two Overlay Zoning Districts apply: the Downtown (D) Overlay District and Historic (H) Overlay District.
8. **Description of Project:** Refer to the discussion below.

Proposed Project and Location

The proposed project consists of renovating the former Novato Community Development Department Building located at the City's Civic Center in downtown Novato. The Civic Center is bounded on the south by DeLong Avenue, on the east by Sherman Avenue, on the west by Machin Avenue, and on the north by Cain Lane. Known as the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project, the project site is located at the southeast corner of the Civic Center at the intersection of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue. Figure 1, *Project Location*, illustrates the location of the City of Novato in reference to the location of other jurisdictions within the north Bay Area. Figure 1 also illustrates the location of the Civic Center with the project site in reference to the local Novato street network. The Civic Center and project site is located immediately south of the City's Grant Avenue core downtown business area.

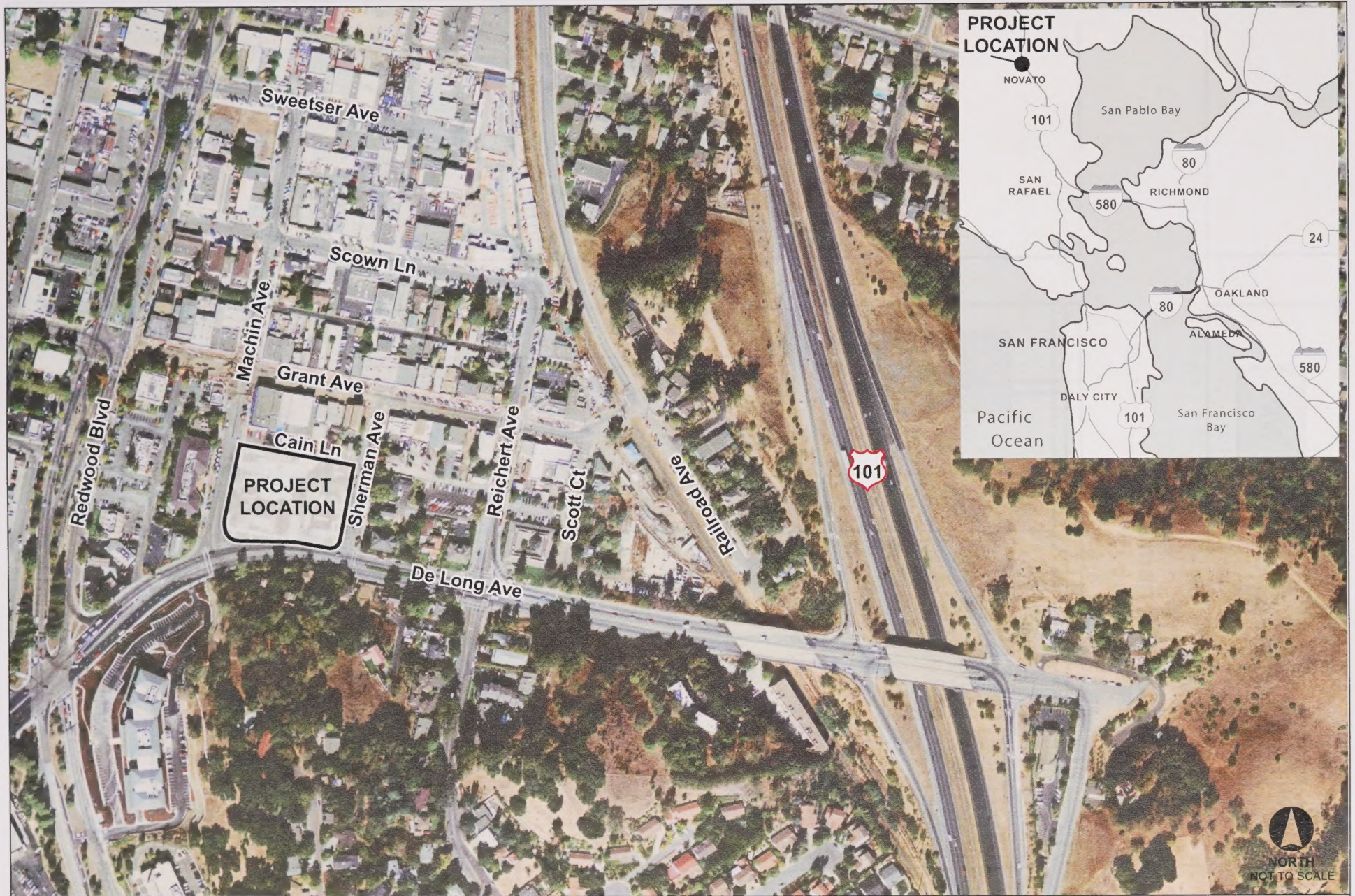
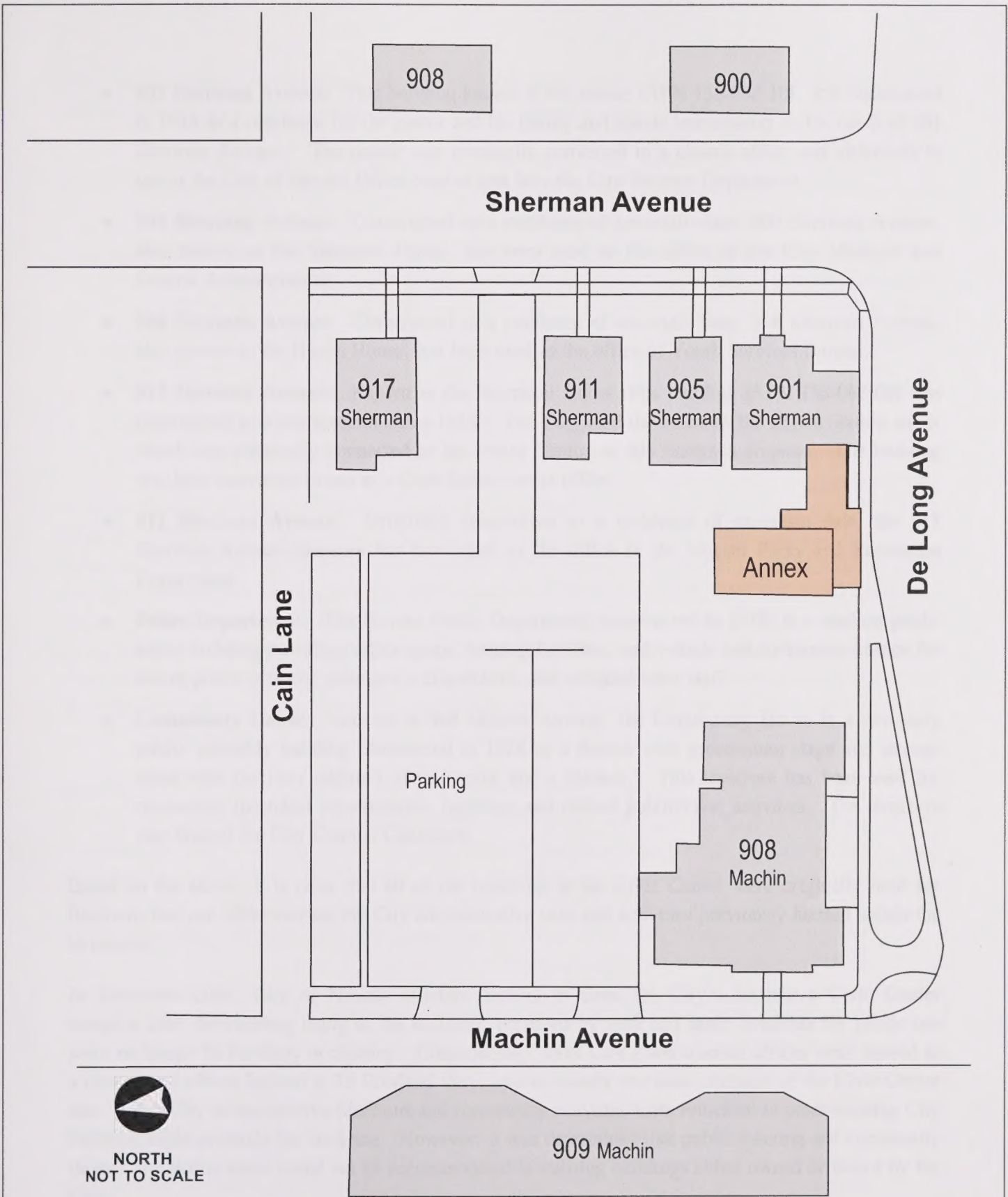


FIGURE 2-1
Project Location

Source: Google Earth, 2007.



- **905 Sherman Avenue:** This building known as the manse (APN 153-062-10), was constructed in 1918 as a residence for the pastor and his family and stands immediately to the north of 901 Sherman Avenue.² The manse was eventually converted to a church office and ultimately to use as the City of Novato Police Station and later the City Finance Department.
- **900 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 900 Sherman Avenue, also known as the Simmons House, has been used as the office of the City Manager and Central Administration.
- **908 Sherman Avenue:** Constructed as a residence of uncertain date, 908 Sherman Avenue, also known as the Hanen House, has been used as the office of Youth Services Bureau.
- **911 Sherman Avenue:** Known as the Morrison House, this building (APN 153-062-09) was constructed as a residence in about 1916.³ The City used the house as the Police Station annex which was physically connected to the Police Station at 905 Sherman Avenue. The building was later converted to use as a Code Enforcement office.
- **917 Sherman Avenue:** Originally constructed as a residence of uncertain date, the 917 Sherman Avenue structure has been used as the office of the Novato Parks and Recreation Department.
- **Police Department.** The Novato Police Department, constructed in 1978, is a modern public safety building providing office space, training facilities, and vehicle and equipment storage for sworn police officers, emergency dispatchers, and administrative staff.
- **Community House:** Located at 908 Machin Avenue, the Community House is a two-story public assembly building constructed in 1926 as a theater with proscenium stage and storage areas with the later addition of restrooms and a kitchen.⁴ This structure has been used for recreation, theatrical presentations, meetings and related public/civic activities. The structure also housed the City Council Chambers.

Based on the above, it is clear that all of the buildings at the Civic Center were originally built for functions that are different than the City administrative uses and activities previously housed within the structures.

In December 2004, City of Novato officials decided to close the City's downtown Civic Center complex after determining many of the buildings occupied by staff and made available for public use were no longer fit for daily occupancy. Consequently, most City governmental offices were moved to a complex of offices located at 75 Rowland Way, approximately one mile southeast of the Civic Center site. Some City administrative functions and community activities were relocated to other existing City facilities made available for such use. However, it was determined that public meeting and community theater production space could not be accommodated in existing buildings either owned or leased by the City.

In March 2007, the Novato City Council directed staff to initiate project planning, design, and environmental review for the proposed renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue. The objectives of the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project are to:

- Renovate the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue; and
- Provide a public plaza and Civic Green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in support of the public use and gatherings to be hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue.

Project Description

In accordance with the objectives noted above, the proposed project would involve the following:

- Lifting and moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building ten (10) to twelve (12) feet north of its current position and renovating the structure.

Lifting the 901 Sherman Avenue building off its foundation and moving the structure north of its current location is proposed to provide a greater setback from vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue. Relocation is desired to increase space between the building and the north edge of DeLong Avenue. The existing on-street parking along the north side of DeLong Avenue between Sherman Avenue and Machin Avenue is planned to be replaced with a second westbound travel lane as a part of the Whole Foods mixed-use project being constructed on the west side of Railroad Avenue, east of the Civic Center.⁵ Without building relocation and with the planned lane reconfiguration, vehicle traffic would be within approximately six-feet of the south wall of the 901 Sherman Avenue building were it to remain in its current location.

Renovating the 901 Sherman Avenue building is the heart of the project. A comprehensive renovation of the structure is proposed to accommodate various civic and public activities as described further below. Renovation would include the church structure itself constructed in 1896 and the attached school room addition on the south side of the building constructed in 1934. Other planned improvements include a new building foundation, seismic safety enhancements, and reconstructed electrical, plumbing and HVAC systems. All new interior finishes are included in the project.

In addition to interior renovation, the project would include exterior renovation. Acoustically-rated windows are proposed to replace the original single-pane glazing found throughout the building to improve sound attenuation and energy efficiency. Window shape and trim would match the existing windows. A new roof would be installed with the surface primarily consisting of cement fiber slate shingles. The roof would also be fitted with a building integrated solar energy system on the south and southeast facing roof surfaces. The solar energy system would consist of photovoltaic shingles shaped and mounted in a manner consistent with the cement fiber slate shingles. The new roof system, including the photovoltaic shingles would not alter the pitch of the existing roof on 901 Sherman Avenue. Solar electrical equipment would be located in the attic space of 901 Sherman Avenue and

within the electrical room of the 1950 Annex. Overall, the exterior architectural appearance of the 901 Sherman Avenue building would be retained.

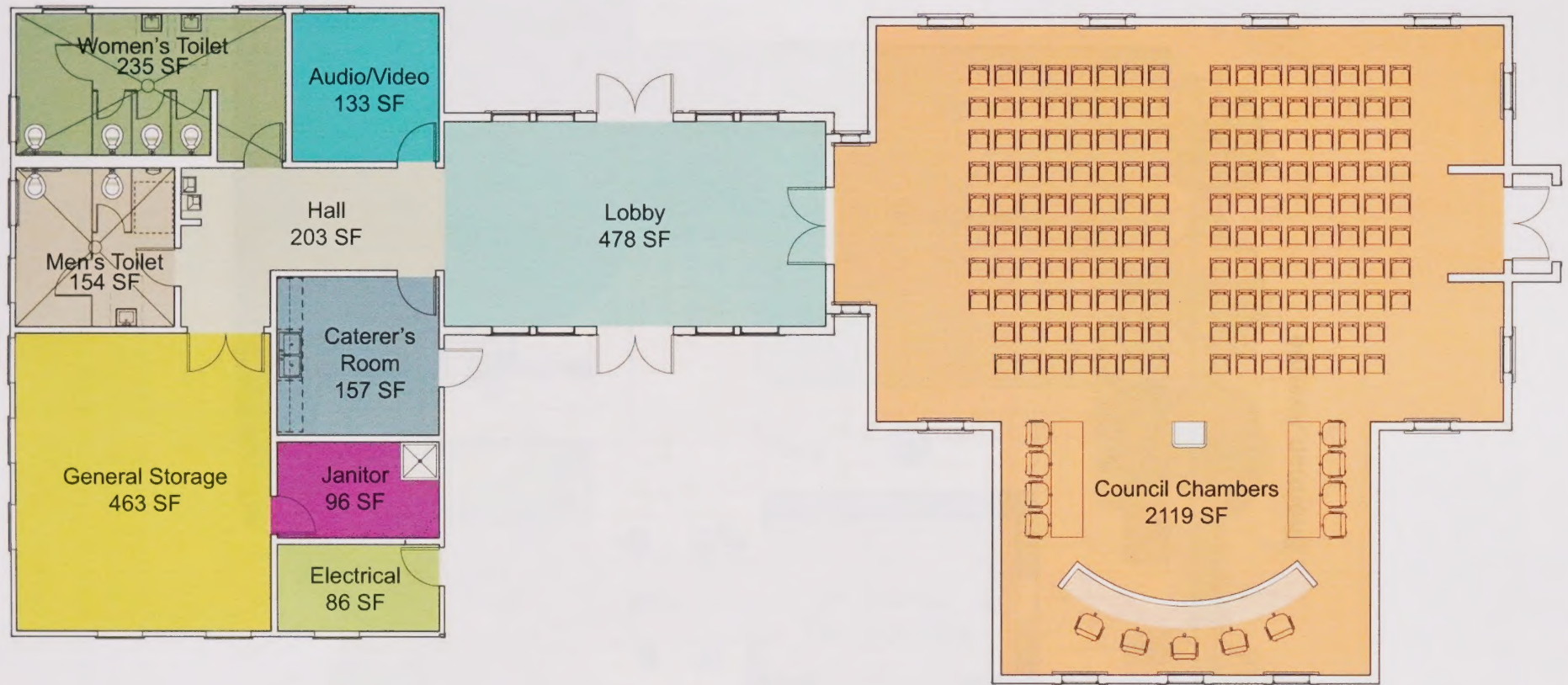
901 Sherman Avenue would be reconfigured as follows: the existing connecting passageway between the main 901 Sherman Avenue building and the 1950 Annex would be removed and a new, enlarged passageway serving as a lobby for 901 Sherman Avenue would be constructed. The lobby would have a floor area of about 478 sq. ft. The east portion of the 1950 Annex (exclusive of the connecting passageway) consisting of about 1,527 sq. ft. of space, would be reconfigured and used as a service area for 901 Sherman Avenue. The service area would include materials storage, an audio/visual equipment room, caterer's room, janitor's room and restrooms. A new hip roof at an 8:12 pitch is planned to be added to the 1950 Annex. The new hip roof would replace the existing flat roof and provide architectural continuity between the Annex and 901 Sherman Avenue. As with 901 Sherman Avenue, the roof would be fitted with a building integrated solar energy system on the south and southeast facing roof surfaces. The solar energy system would consist of photovoltaic shingles shaped and mounted in a manner consistent with the cement fiber slate shingles.

The renovated 901 Sherman Avenue structure would contain approximately 2,100 sq. ft. of floor area dedicated to public meeting/multi-use event space.⁶ Because the floor elevation of both the new Council Chambers and the Annex building would be below the elevation of DeLong Avenue, a subdrain would be installed between the Annex and DeLong Avenue to prevent water seepage problems. The Annex is planned to be lowered about three and one-half feet to match the floor elevation of 901 Sherman Avenue. A Schematic Floor Plan is shown on Figure 2-3.

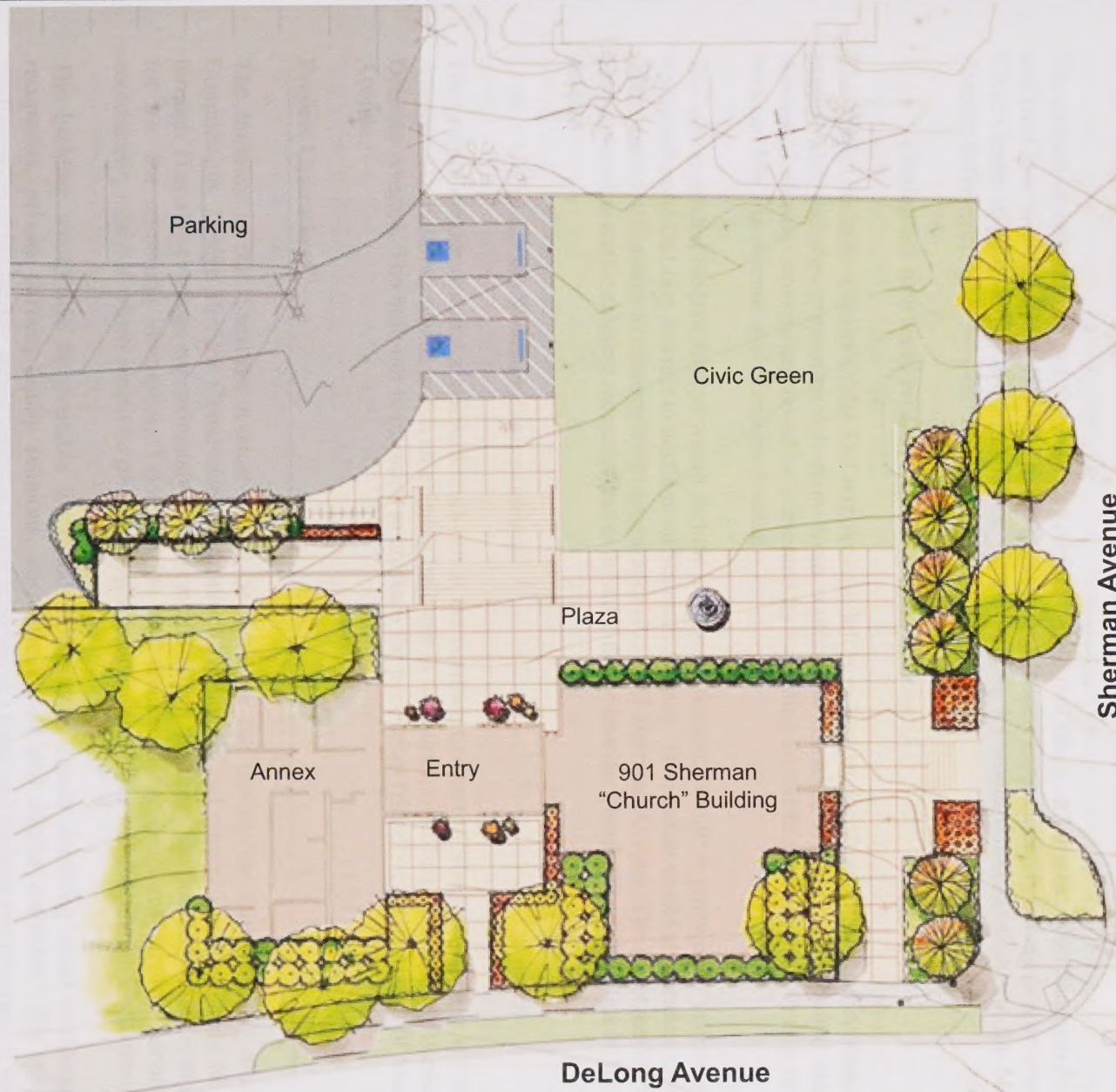
- Developing a public plaza and Civic Green space.

The project includes the development of a public plaza and Civic Green at the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue in its relocated position. The plaza would consist of decorative paving, ornamental landscaping, retaining walls and public art to include a decorative water fountain feature. The public plaza would serve as the primary point of entry (including an ADA compliant ramp) to 901 Sherman Avenue.

The Civic Green is planned to be a turf area of approximately 7,000 sq. ft. on the north side of 901 Sherman Avenue.⁷ The Civic Green would include a decorative trellis feature located at the boundary between the Civic Center parking lot and Civic Green. The Civic Green is intended to be available in support of public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue as well as for general public use. New ornamental trees and shrubs would be included in the landscape plan to create an attractive gateway appearance. A Schematic Landscape Plan is shown on Figure 2-4.



NORTH
NOT TO SCALE



NORTH
NOT TO SCALE

Source: Interactive Resources

Avenue, known as the Morrison House (APN 153-062-09), was constructed as a residence in about 1916.⁴ The City used the house as the Police Station annex which was physically connected to the Police Station at 905 Sherman Avenue and later served to house the City's office of Code Enforcement. Other buildings at the Civic Center would not be disturbed and remain in place with the exception of removing the existing passageway between 901 Sherman Avenue and the Annex, and reconfiguring the use of space within the Annex to support the operations of 901 Sherman Avenue as noted above.

- *Closing Blodgett Lane.*

The project includes closure of the western 120-foot segment of Blodgett Lane between Sherman Avenue and the Civic Center parking lot. While this segment of Blodgett Lane currently serves as a driveway to Civic Center parking lot, access to the Civic Center parking lot would remain available at the Machin Avenue entry/exit.

- *Closing left turn lanes on DeLong and Sherman Avenues.*

The project includes closure of the DeLong Avenue left turn lane to northbound Sherman Avenue. The project also includes preventing left turns from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. Left turn movements would be prevented by extending an existing median in DeLong Avenue between Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue.

The new extended median section would include a segment designed to allow emergency vehicle access from eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue. The median would also feature trees and other landscape features to enhance street appearances near 901 Sherman Avenue. The street modifications are proposed as traffic calming measures and to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue.

- *Modifying the Sherman Avenue sidewalk.*

The project includes adding a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out would match an existing bulb-out at the northeast corner of Sherman Avenue and DeLong Avenue. The bulb-out is intended to enhance the pedestrian friendly characteristics of Sherman Avenue.

Project Operations⁵

The building at 901 Sherman Avenue would be available for use by the City Council, Planning Commission, Design Review Commission and other City boards and commissions regularly Monday through Thursday evenings approximately 20 percent of the available time. The building would be available for use the remaining afternoons, Friday nights and weekends for programs directly serving the community, many of which would be programs sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department.

The building would also be available for rentals and private events involving small weddings and receptions, private parties, family reunions, corporate events and similar activities.⁶ The size and configuration of the facility would limit use to one program at a time, and perhaps two programs if they are small and can share the available space.

Typically, the types of programs to be provided would accommodate from 10 to 40 participants. As an example, on any given week day, children's and adult classes could be conducted from 9 AM to 6 PM depending on City Council, Planning Commission or Design Review Commission start times. Parks and

Recreation programs are not anticipated to be sponsored on Friday nights. The facility would be available for rentals and private purposes on most Friday evenings and about 30 weekends per year.

Project Scheduling & Construction/Demolition

Scheduling: Scheduling renovation of 901 Sherman Avenue has not been set at this time. The merits of the project would require further review by the Novato City Council prior to determining when the renovation project would proceed. Further deliberations on the project could extend into early 2008. The preparation of demolition, relocation, construction and renovation plans could extend into mid-2008 prior to issuance for competitive bid. Following the acceptance and award of bids, project implementation could occur in 2009 or later, depending on funding and other priorities as determined. The following highlights specific demolition and construction activities contemplated by the City to be included in the project.

Demolition: Demolition of the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings would be required prior to relocation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building. Demolition activities would occur over about a three day period. Demolition would require use of a track mounted tractor with an articulating bucket loading debris into a ten wheel dump truck. Waste materials would be subject to the City's Recycling and Reuse Ordinance (Novato Municipal Code Section 4-12). After demolition, moving the 901 Sherman Avenue building would take about one week following the completion of a new foundation. Raising the building would involve the use of hydraulic jacks and a tractor would be used to pull the building to the new foundation.

Dust Control: During demolition, dust (particulate) emissions would be controlled through continuous watering and the covering of truck loads. Because project construction would result in ground disturbing activities that could temporarily increase dust emissions near the project site, such emissions would be effectively controlled to prevent ambient air quality standards violations by implementing a series of dust suppression emissions as promulgated by the Bay Area Air Quality management District. Such measures include watering all active construction areas at least twice daily, covering trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials, sweeping daily (with water sweepers) paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at the construction site, and sweeping streets daily if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.

Noise: The City's contracts with demolition, construction and renovation contractors will provide for specific noise reduction measures designed to control noise emissions in the project area and reduce noise emissions on sensitive receptors. Such measures will include limiting noise-generating construction activities, including truck traffic coming to and from the site for any purpose, warming-up or servicing of equipment, demolition, and any preparation for construction to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.; limiting grading activities and equipment operations to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., when City inspectors are available; and providing mufflers in good condition on equipment driven by internal combustion engines. At all times during project demolition, grading and construction, stationary noise-generating equipment are to be located as far as practicable from sensitive receptors and placed so that emitted noise is directed away from residences. The construction contractor will also designate a "noise disturbance coordinator" who will be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise.

Additionally, specific noise design features to be incorporated into the renovation project to meet interior noise compatibility standards include adding 3.5 inch thick batt insulation in the stud cavities of the exterior walls, replacing (or upgrading) the 901 Sherman Avenue windows facing DeLong Avenue to provide a minimum sound transmission class (STC) rating of 38, and including an air conditioning or ventilation system to provide a habitable interior environment when the windows are closed for noise control.⁷

Hazardous Materials: Prior to demolition or renovation activities, identified potential mercury-containing thermostats/switches, lights, ballasts and air conditioning units are to be removed and recycled or disposed of by a licensed contractor according to all applicable federal, state and local regulations. Specific measures to avoid the release of hazardous materials are to be included in contracts for all building renovation and demolition activities, both prior to and during the work. Further, Prior to removal or demolition work that could disturb identified asbestos containing materials, a licensed asbestos abatement removal contractor will remove such materials in compliance with the most recent applicable federal, state, and local laws governing the abatement, transport, and disposal of asbestos containing materials. The removal work scope and requirements are to be included in a work plan/specification developed by a California Certified Asbestos Contractor.⁸

Geotechnical/Drainage: The project includes specific measures to take into account underlying soils and existing drainage conditions. Support for perimeter foundations and retaining walls is to be achieved through the use of drilled, cast-in-place, reinforced concrete piers. Piers are to be interconnected with grade beams to support structural loads. Fill required for the project would include 1,400 cubic yards of selected material to construct a new building pad for 901 Sherman Avenue, the plaza and Civic Green; 900 cubic yards of material for raising and constructing a new foundation for the 1950 Annex; and 160 cubic yards of material for filling excavations left as a result of demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. New interior floors will consist of structural slabs or joist-supported wood designed to span between pier or pile foundations supported in bedrock. Soil movement of slabs-on-grade is to be reduced by removing the weak and expansive soils. Surface and subsurface water is to be controlled through the use of perimeter subdrains, wall backdrains and slab underdrains to reduce water infiltration beneath the building.⁹

9. Surrounding Land Uses and Setting:

The project site is located within the Novato Civic Center. All Civic Center buildings have in the past been used for City administrative and operational functions, and various community activities sponsored by local interest and business groups. The Civic Center and project site are located immediately south of the City's Grant Avenue core downtown business area. Land uses surrounding the project area are primarily commercial retail, mixed with service establishments, restaurants, office buildings and several residences. A new Whole Foods and mixed use residential project is under construction one block east of the Civic Center and project site.

10. Other Public Agencies Whose Approval is Required (e.g., Permits, Financing Approval, or Participation Agreement):

None identified.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED:

The environmental factors checked below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Potentially Significant Impact" as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| ☒ Land Use/Planning | ☐ Air Quality | ☐ Utilities/Service Systems |
| ☐ Population/Housing | ☐ Noise | ☐ Hazards & Hazardous Materials |
| ☐ Geology/Soils | ☒ Aesthetics | ☐ Agriculture Resources |
| ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality | ☒ Cultural Resources | ☐ Mineral Resources |
| ☐ Biological Resources | ☐ Public Services | ☒ Mandatory Findings of Significance |
| ☐ Transportation/Traffic | ☐ Recreation | |

DETERMINATION: (To be completed by the Lead Agency)

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☒ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a "potentially significant impact" or Potentially significant unless mitigated" impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

For

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS:

- 1) A brief explanation is required for all answers except “No Impact” answers that are adequately supported by the information sources a lead agency cites in the parentheses following each question. A “No Impact” answer is adequately supported if the referenced information sources show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g, the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A “No Impact” answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g, the project will not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project-specific screening analysis).
- 2) All answers must take account of the whole action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts.
- 3) Once the lead agency has determined that a particular physical impact may occur, then the checklist answers must indicate whether the impact is potentially significant, less than significant with mitigation, or less than significant. “Potentially Significant Impact” is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more “Potentially Significant Impact” entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.
- 4) “Negative Declaration: Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated” applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from “Potentially Significant Impact” to a “Less Than Significant Impact.” The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures, and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from Section XVII, “Earlier Analyses,” may be cross-referenced).
- 5) Earlier analyses may be used where, pursuant to the tiering, program EIR, or other CEQA process, an effect has been adequately analyzed in an earlier EIR or negative declaration. Section 15063(c)(3)(D). In this case, a brief discussion should identify the following:
 - a) Earlier Analysis Used. Identify and state where they are available for review.
 - b) Impacts Adequately Addressed. Identify which effects from the above checklist were within the scope of and adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and state whether such effects were addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis.
 - c) Mitigation Measures. For effects that are “Less than Significant with Mitigation Measures Incorporated,” describe the mitigation measures which were incorporated or refined from the earlier document and the extent to which they address site-specific conditions for the project.
- 6) Lead agencies are encouraged to incorporate into the checklist references to information sources for potential impacts (e.g, general plans, zoning ordinances). Reference to a previously prepared or outside document should, where appropriate, include a reference to the page or pages where the statement is substantiated.
- 7) Supporting Information Sources: A source list should be attached, and other sources used or individuals contacted should be cited in the discussion.

- 8) This is only a suggested form, and lead agencies are free to use different formats; however, lead agencies should normally address the questions from this checklist that are relevant to a project's environmental effects in whatever format is selected.
- 9) The explanation of each issue should identify:
- the significance criteria or threshold, if any, used to evaluate each question; and
 - the mitigation measure identified, if any, to reduce the impact to less than significance.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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I. LAND USE AND PLANNING – Would the project:

- A. Physically divide an established community? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: The project site is located within the one-acre Novato Civic Center bounded on the south by DeLong Avenue, on the east by Sherman Avenue, on the west by Machin Avenue and on the north by Cain Lane. The 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project site is located at the southeast corner of the Civic Center at the intersection of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue. The Civic Center and project site are located immediately south of the City's Grant Avenue core downtown business area. Land uses surrounding the project area are primarily commercial retail, mixed with service establishments, restaurants, office buildings and several residences (916 Sherman Avenue, 804 DeLong Avenue and locations south of DeLong Avenue). A new Whole Foods and mixed use residential project is under construction one block east of the Civic Center and project site. Eleven commercial enterprises occupy the space between Cain Lane and Grant Avenue along the north edge of the Civic Center with additional commerce extending along Grant Avenue and intersecting streets from Railroad Avenue in the east to the intersection of Grant Avenue and Novato Boulevard one mile to the west.

Impacts: The objectives of the project are to renovate and restore the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a City Council chamber, public meeting and community event venue, and provide (construct) a public plaza and civic green space adjacent to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in support of the public use and gatherings hosted at 901 Sherman Avenue. This would require relocating the 901 Sherman Avenue building 10 to 12 feet north of its current position, removing an existing passageway to the 1950 Annex structure, and removing the two unoccupied former City office space buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. The project would also close the western 120-foot segment of Blodgett Lane between Sherman Avenue and the Civic Center parking lot that functions as the second parking lot driveway. Access/egress to the parking lot would remain at Machin Avenue. Further, the project would close the DeLong Avenue left turn lane to northbound Sherman Avenue, close the southbound Sherman Avenue left turn lane to eastbound DeLong Avenue, and add a sidewalk bulb-out at the northwest corner of Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue.

In view of the above, the renovation project would essentially be confined to the existing Civic Center site and portions of Sherman Avenue. Building modifications as noted along with the removal of two unoccupied City-owned structures to allow building renovation and the construction of public use space would not divide an established community. The project would essentially be a Civic Center enhancement project and as such would constitute a beneficial community impact.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6, 2007 and information as contained in:

Historic Resources Evaluation, City of Novato, April 27, 2007, Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers.

Redevelopment Plan for the downtown Novato Redevelopment Project, prepared by the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Novato, June, 1999.

Downtown Novato Specific Plan, Adopted by the Novato City Council on July 14, 1998 by Resolution Numbers 97-98 and 103-98

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
B. Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting: The proposed project site is located within the Community Facilities (CF) designation as shown on the Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1. CF designated land uses include public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, City offices, and other civic and utility uses as well as privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses.

The project site is located within the Community Facilities Primary Zoning District (CF). The CF Zoning District is applied to areas suitable for public land uses including government offices, meeting halls, schools and libraries, and other related municipal uses. The CF Zoning District is intended to be consistent with the community facilities, public utilities, and civic uses land use designation of the General Plan. In addition, two Overlay Zoning Districts in the Civic Center area are indicated on the Zoning Map where special provisions apply, inclusive of the project site. These districts include the Downtown (D) Overlay District and Historic (H) Overlay District. The D Overlay District is applied to areas covered by the Downtown Novato Specific Plan to provide standards for development and new land uses that recognize, protect and enhance the desired character of the downtown area. The H Overlay District is intended to protect areas and structures identified by the Community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato's cultural, social, economic, political, aesthetic, architectural heritage, identity and character.

The project site as located within the Civic Center is included within the boundaries of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan area, the Downtown Novato Specific Plan area and the Novato Historic Preservation District. As such, use and development of the project site would be subject to the applicable provisions of these plans, including the objectives, goals and policies of each. Goals and policies of the various elements (chapters) of the General Plan would also apply to use and development of the project site.

Impacts: The 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project would be consistent with the General Plan Map CF designation because there would be no change in historic civic use at the Civic Center as a result of the project. A General Plan Map amendment would not be required.

The project land use would be consistent with the provisions of the established zoning and a zoning amendment would not be required because the project would be a continuation of a long-time civic use in the Civic Center. However, as noted previously the Downtown (D) and Historic (H) Overlay Districts also would apply to the project site. Further an in-depth study is needed to determine whether the project as proposed would conform with the standards for development as documented in the Downtown Novato Specific Plan respecting the desired character of the downtown, or if the project would protect areas and structures identified by the Community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato's heritage and identity. An in-depth study is also needed to determine whether or not the project would comply with objectives, goals and policies of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan, the Downtown Novato Specific Plan, the Novato Historic Preservation District and the Novato General Plan. The project site is not within the Coastal Zone, and therefore would not be subject to the provisions of a local coastal program.

Therefore, it has not been determined whether or not the project would comply or conflict with the provisions of any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and further investigations appear warranted.

Mitigation: No mitigation is identified at this time. The project will require a detailed conformity analysis with respect to the provisions, objectives, goals and policies as applicable of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan, the Downtown Novato Specific Plan, the Novato Historic Preservation District and the Novato General Plan. Mitigation measures may be required to avoid plan conflicts as determined through a detailed plan analysis in an EIR.

Sources: Redevelopment Plan for the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Project, Prepared by the Redevelopment Agency of the City of Novato, June, 1999.

Downtown Novato Specific Plan, Adopted by the Novato City Council on July 14, 1998 by Resolution No. 97-98 and 103-98, as amended to date.

City of Novato General Plan, Adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996 by Resolution No. 21-96, as amended to date.

Novato Historic Preservation District (as documented in the Downtown Novato Specific Plan).

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The project site is highly urbanized, meaning that the site and surrounding properties at the Civic Center are completely developed with structures and paving. Refer to the discussion above under item I B. There is no habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan applicable to the project site or immediate area.

Impacts: No impacts are identified for the proposed project.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Downtown Novato Specific Plan, Adopted by the Novato City Council on July 14, 1998 by Resolution No. 97-98 and 103-98, as amended to date.

City of Novato General Plan, Adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996 by Resolution No. 21-96, as amended to date.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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II. POPULATION AND HOUSING – Would the project:

- A. Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: Since the 1960s, the approximate two acre Civic Center area bounded by DeLong Avenue, Sherman Avenue, Cain Lane and Machin Avenue has been used for City administrative and civic functions, including public community events and activities. With closure of all the buildings at the Civic Center in 2004 due to the buildings being unfit for daily occupancy, the Civic Center buildings have remained for all practical purposes vacant and used for facility and document storage on a limited basis. The parking lot at the Civic Center continues to be used for the parking of City owned and employee vehicles. Most City offices have been moved to a complex of office spaces located at 75 Rowland Way, approximately one mile southeast of the Civic Center site. The Novato Police Department continues to function in its building on the west side of Machin Avenue opposite the Civic Center site.

Impacts: The project does not propose the construction of new homes and businesses that would induce substantial population growth. The project also does not propose the extension of new roads or infrastructure. The project would renovate and restore the 901 Sherman Avenue building for use as a public meeting and community event venue consistent with historic use of the Civic Center, and create a public plaza and green space. The project would also close left turn lanes on DeLong and Sherman Avenues as explained previously and remove the two former City office structures at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Email memorandum to Ted Adams, EIP Associates, from Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato community Development Department, August 27, 2007.

Email memorandum to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Director, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.

Historic Resources Evaluation, City of Novato, April 27, 2007, Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- B. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The Civic Center where the project site is located contains no housing. Although several of the Civic Center buildings were originally constructed for residential use, the structures have been used for City office space since the 1960s and not for housing. Buildings at the Civic Center are not currently used for daily office activities. There is no permanent or temporary on-site population.

Impacts: While the project would remove former City office space at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue which are both currently unoccupied, the project would not displace substantial numbers of existing housing necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Email memorandum to Ted Adams, EIP Associates, from Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato community Development Department, August 27, 2007,

Email memorandum to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Director, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.

Historic Resources Evaluation, City of Novato, April 27, 2007, Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- C. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: Refer to the discussion under item II B above.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion under item II B above.

Mitigation: Refer to the discussion under item II B above.

Sources: Refer to the discussion under item II B above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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III. GEOLOGY AND SOILS – Would the project:

A. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:

1. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? (Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42.)
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐
- ☒

Setting: Under the authority of the 1972 Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act, the State of California delineates Earthquake Fault Zones (EFZ - called Special Studies Zones before January 1994) around known active and potentially active faults. The EFZ defines an area in which no structures for human occupancy may be built without the prior completion of a fault location report prepared by a California Registered Geologist to demonstrate the building footprint is not underlain by an identified active fault trace. The project site is not located within an EFZ. The closest EFZs to the project site encompass segments of the northwest-trending Rodgers Creek-Hayward Fault Zone about 8.5 miles northeast of the site and about 9.4 miles southeast of the project site. The EFZ along the San Andreas Fault Zone is about 12.4 miles to the southwest. The potentially active Burdell Mountain fault is about 1.5 miles northeast of the project site and does not trend toward the project site. This fault has not been studied in detail, but displays topographic features indicative of possible geologically recent displacement (Ford, 2003).

Impacts: Because no EFZ crosses the project site and no EFZ trends toward the site, no adverse impact related to rupture of a known earthquake fault exposing people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death is expected.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

Hart, E.W, and W.A. Bryant, *Fault-Rupture Hazard Zones in California, Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Act with Index to Earthquake Fault Zones Maps*, California Geological Survey (formerly the Division of Mines and Geology), Special Publication 42, 1997 Edition, Supplements 1 and 2 added 1999, Supplement 3 released 1 May 2003, last edited on-line 1 May 2006, see Figure 4B.

Eric Ford, *Mapping and Argon³⁹/Argon⁴⁰ dating of Coast Range volcanic rocks at Burdell Mountain with implications for long-term offset on the East Bay fault system*, MS Thesis, Department of Geosciences, San Francisco State University, in progress (2003).

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☒	☐

2. Strong seismic groundshaking?

Setting: The project site is in the San Andreas Fault System (about 44 miles wide in the Bay Area) which contains eight principal active faults: the San Andreas, San Gregorio, Hayward, Rodgers Creek, Calaveras, West Napa, Concord, and Green Valley. A characteristic earthquake on the San Andres fault (Moment Magnitude [M_w] 7.9) probably is the largest that would affect the project area, although greater effects would be expected from a characteristic earthquake on the Rodgers Creek-North Hayward segment of the Rodgers Creek-Hayward fault (M_w 7.1) because of its proximity to the project site.

Because the project site is between eight and ten miles of known active segments of the Rodgers Creek-Hayward fault, strong to very strong seismically-induced groundshaking (Modified Mercalli Intensity Scale VII to VIII) would be expected at the project site. Peak horizontal ground accelerations in the project area are expected to be in excess 0.5g (50 percent of the force of gravity), which means the standards for California Building Code (CBC) Seismic Zone 4 would be the minimum requirements for site design. Because the project site is within the 15-kilometer (9.3 miles) near-source zone of the Rodgers Creek fault, CBC Section 1629, *Criteria Selection*, requires Near-Source Factors for Seismic Source Type A to be applied to the design of structures.

On the basis of research continuing since the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) estimates there is about a 62 percent probability of at least one large earthquake (M_w 6.7 or greater) in the San Francisco Bay region in the 30-year period between 2003 and 2032. The Rodgers Creek-Hayward fault has a 26 percent probability of generating a M_w 6.7+ earthquake in this timeframe.

Impacts: The design earthquake for the project site is estimated by the United States and California Geological Survey to be a M_w 6.8 earthquake on the Rodgers Creek-Hayward fault. The resulting vibration could cause damage to buildings, roads, and infrastructure (primary effects), and could cause ground failures such as liquefaction or settlement in poorly compacted fill (secondary effects). In the City of Novato, buildings for human occupancy and all associated infrastructure are required to reduce the exposure to potentially damaging seismic vibrations through seismic resistant design, in conformance with Chapter 16, *Structural Design Requirements*, Division IV, *Earthquake Design*, of the California Building Code. Because the project site is in a near-source area, Section 1629, *Criteria Selection*, of the Building Code requires special seismic design factors be applied to the project during site grading and foundation construction. The report of the geotechnical investigation prepared for the proposed project provides the site data and procedure for applying these factors and the results of the calculations to be used in the project design. The updated geotechnical report recommends drilled pier support for the perimeter foundations and retaining walls: pipe piles or helical piers are recommended for interior foundations. The piers and piles would be supported in the bedrock which underlies the project site between 3 and 17 feet below the ground surface.

The California Historical Building Code is the regulation adopted by the State Historical Building Safety Board (Title 24 Part 8), published in the latest adopted California Building Code as Chapter 34, Existing Buildings, Division II, California Historical

Building Code. The State Historical Building Code cross-references the Health and Safety Code, Part 2.7, Division 13, Sections 18950–18961, the State Historical Building Safety Code. Section 18954 states in part:

The building department of every city or county or other local agency that has jurisdiction over the enforcement of code within its legal authority shall apply the alternative standards and regulations adopted pursuant to Section 18959.5 in permitting repairs, alterations, and additions necessary for the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, safety, moving, or continued use of a qualified historical building or structure. A state agency shall apply the alternative regulations adopted pursuant to Section 18959.5 in permitting repairs, alterations, and additions necessary for the preservation, restoration, rehabilitation, safety, moving, or continued use of a qualified historical building or structure. The application of any alternative standards for the provision of access to the disabled or exemption from access requirements shall be done on a case-by-case and item-by-item basis, and shall not be applied to an entire qualified historical building or structure without individual consideration of each item, and shall not be applied to related sites or areas except on an item-by-item basis.

Division 13 cross-references Government code, Section 8897.3.b., which states with regard to foundation anchor bolt requirements, cripple wall bracing requirements, and water heater bracing, anchoring, or strapping requirements:

Any qualified historical building or structure, as defined pursuant to Section 18955 of the Health and Safety Code, shall be permitted to utilize alternatives to the requirements of this section, as provided by the State Historical Building Code (Part 2.7 (commencing with Section 18950) of Division 13 of the Health and Safety Code) and the regulations issued pursuant thereto.

The US Department of the Interior provides information and guidelines for the seismic retrofit of historic structures, but no structural or specific preservation standards. The authority to set structural and preservation standards rests with the local jurisdictions, in this case, the City and the State. Using the City Building Code and the California Historical Building Code, the City has the option to devise general guidelines and specific requirements to be met by contractors undertaking the restoration of historical buildings to ensure appropriate levels of structural integrity and architectural preservation.

Adherence to the Building Code, as required by state and City law, would ensure maximum practicable protection available for users of the building and associated infrastructure. Adherence would include:

- the use of CBC Seismic Zone 4 Standards, including Near-Source Factors, as the minimum seismic-resistant design for all proposed facilities;
- additional seismic-resistant earthwork and construction design criteria, based on the site-specific recommendations of a California Certified Engineering Geologist in cooperation with the project's California-registered geotechnical and structural engineers;

- an engineering analyses that demonstrates satisfactory performance of alluvium or fill where either forms part or all of the support, especially where the possible occurrence of liquefiable soils exists; and
- an analysis of soil expansion potential and appropriate remediation (compaction, removal/replacement, etc.) prior to using any expansive soils for foundation support.
- Use of appropriate recommendations in Chapter 34, Existing Buildings, Division II, California Historical Building Code.

Based on the existing regulatory framework that addresses earthquake safety issues and adherence to the requirements of the Building Code, seismically-induced groundshaking would not be a substantial hazard at the project site. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding exposure of people or structures to the potential adverse effects of strong seismic groundshaking.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Bortugno, E.J, et al, *Map Showing Recency of Faulting*, San Francisco-San Jose Quadrangle, California Geological Survey (formerly the Division of Mines and Geology), Regional Geologic Map Series, No. 2A, 1990, sheet 5, scale 1:250,000.

Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Geotechnical Report Update, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

Working Group on California Earthquake Probabilities, *Earthquake Probabilities in the San Francisco Bay Region: 2003 to 2032 - A Summary of Findings*, United States Geological Survey, Open File Report 03-214, online Version updated May 16, 2007 <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/regional/nca/wg02/index.php> .

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV Building and Housing, amended in its entirety by Ordinance No. 923, originally adopted and amended by Ordinance Numbers 17, 86, 200, 201, 490, 601, 602, 791, 890, 911 and 922. The 2001 Edition of the California Building Code, known as the California Code of Regulations, Title 24, incorporating the 1997 Edition of the Uniform Building Code published by the International Conference of Building Officials Volume I, except Sections 106.2(1.), (4.) and (5.) and 107.2, 107.3, 107.4, 107.5.2 and 107.6, but including only Chapters A3.(Division IV only), A4 (with amendment to Section 421.1 1.), A12, A15 (excluding Section 1515), A18, A29, A31 (Division III only) A33 of appendices as published by the International Conference of Building Officials.

Division of the State Architect, *2001 California Historical Building Code*.
<http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/SHBSB/2001chbc.htm> , accessed October 25, 2007.

US Department of the Interior, Technical Preservation Services, Preservation Brief 41, The Seismic Retrofit of Historic Buildings: Keeping Preservation in the Forefront, undated. <http://www.nps.gov/history/hps/tps/briefs/brief41.htm>, accessed October 25, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
3. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: Liquefaction is the loss of soil strength caused by seismic forces acting on water-saturated, granular soil, leading to a "quicksand" condition generating various types of ground failure. Liquefaction is most likely to occur within 50 feet below the ground surface (bgs) in saturated, uniformly fine-grained, poorly consolidated sediments. The project site is underlain by 0 to 8 feet of undocumented fill (soft to medium stiff sandy clay and silt, and loose to medium dense silty gravel); 0 to 15 feet of colluvium/alluvium (sandy to gravelly clay and gravelly sand); 0 to 17 feet of residual soil (medium stiff to very stiff gravelly and sandy clay, moderately to highly expansive); and 3 to 20 feet of bedrock consisting of sandstone, sheared shale, and serpentinite. Groundwater was encountered between 1 and 4 feet bgs.

Impacts: According to the geotechnical report prepared for the project site, there is low risk of liquefaction because the unconsolidated geological materials are relatively dense and contain an high percentage of fines (silt and clay) which, although saturated seasonally, contain a sufficient mix of particle sizes to render liquefaction unlikely. The underlying residual soil and bedrock are not subject to liquefaction. The risk of differential compaction is high because the expansion potential of the residual soil could produce settlement. The risk of lateral spreading is low because there are no free faces (channel walls, steep slopes) on or adjacent to the project site.

Potentially unstable soils disrupted during excavation are required by provisions of the Building Code to be removed and replaced, or otherwise treated to provide appropriate foundation support and to protect them from failures such as liquefaction. Adherence to the Seismic Zone 4 soil and foundation support parameters of Chapters 16 and 18 of the Building Code and the grading requirements in Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, as required by City and state law and described in under Item III.A.2, above, ensures the maximum practicable protection available from soil failures of all types, including liquefaction, under static or dynamic conditions for structures and their associated trenches, temporary slopes, and foundations.

Based on the existing regulatory framework that addresses earthquake-related safety issues and adherence to the requirements of the Building Code, seismically induced ground failures would not be a substantial hazard at the project site. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding exposure of people or structures to the potential adverse effects of static or seismic-related ground failures, including liquefaction, compaction, or lateral spreading.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV Building and Housing.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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4. Landslides?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The project site is between 20 and 30 feet above mean sea level and slopes very gently northward at an average grade of less than one percent (< 1 foot/100 feet).

Impacts: Because the project site is nearly flat and there are no slide prone hill slopes adjacent to it, landslides would not be a hazard.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: PBS&J site inspections, August 23, 2007, September 6 and 14, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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B. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?

☐	☐	☒	☐
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Setting: About 95 percent of the project site is covered by buildings and parking lots. The remaining 5 percent of the ground surface has been planted with mowed turf (lawn) and ornamental shrubs. Because the site is paved, covered with buildings, or contains ornamental plantings that are routinely maintained, the site is not prone to natural erosion.

Impacts: Because one of the major effects of loss of topsoil is sedimentation in receiving waters, erosion control standards are set by the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) through administration of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit process for storm drainage discharge. The NPDES permit requires implementation of nonpoint source control of stormwater runoff through the application of a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) during the construction and operational phase of the project. These BMPs are implemented to reduce the amount of constituents, including eroded sediment, that enter streams and other water bodies. The City's Building Code contains drainage and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 that address the prevention of on- and off-site deposition in the storm drain system and waterways. Further explanation of this issue is in Item IV, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, Sections A and C of this Initial Study.

Based on the existing regulatory framework of the RWQCB that addresses water quality issues and adherence to the drainage and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, erosion and sedimentation would not be substantial hazards at the project site. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: PBS&J site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6 and 14, 2007.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV Building and Housing.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: As explained in Item III.A.3, above, the site is underlain soil and rock materials that have low potentials for seismic-related ground failures, such as liquefaction or lateral spreading, and would have less-than-significant impacts.

Item III.A.4, above, explains that the site is nearly flat and, therefore, not subject to on-site landsliding. Similarly, the lands adjacent to the project site are flat and off-site landsliding would not be an issue associated with the project.

The proposed project does not include and is not adjacent to any free faces (channel walls, steep slopes) toward which lateral spreading could occur. Consequently, lateral spreading would not be an issue associated with the project.

The existence of undocumented fill beneath the project site makes it necessary to ensure the materials used for foundation support are sound. Unsuitable materials may heave, subside, or collapse leading to excavation wall failure, building settlement, and/or utility line and pavement disruption.

Impacts: As stated in Item III.A.2, above, part of the City’s construction permitting process requires completed reports of soil conditions at the specific construction sites to identify potentially unsuitable soil conditions including liquefaction, subsidence, expansion, and collapse. The evaluations must be conducted by registered soil professionals, and measures to eliminate inappropriate soil conditions must be applied, depending on the soil conditions. The 2005 Herzog Geotechnical Report prepared for project development and design fulfills this requirement. The construction plans being prepared for the project incorporate the geotechnical design recommendations contained in the 2005 Herzog geotechnical Report. The geotechnical investigation for the project recommends that the undocumented fill in which these unsuitable conditions exist be removed and recompacted as engineered fill. Shoring would be needed in excavations deeper than 5 feet. The shallow water table could create wet soil conditions that could necessitate dewatering during excavation and construction.

The design of foundation support, shoring, and dewatering program is required to conform to the geotechnical analysis and implementation criteria described in the Building Code, Chapters 16, 18, and A33. Adherence to the City’s codes and policies would ensure the maximum practicable protection available for users of buildings and infrastructure and their associated trenches, slopes, and foundations.

Based on the existing regulatory framework that addresses soil instability issues and adherence to the requirements of the Building Code and the recommendations contained in the 2005 Herzog Geotechnical Report, expansive soil would not be a substantial hazard at the project site. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding the potentially adverse effects of unstable soils or geologic units.

Mitigation: No mitigation is required.

Sources: Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

PBS&J Site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6 and 14, 2007.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV Building and Housing.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-A of the California Building Code (2001), creating substantial risks to life or property?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: Shrink-swell potential (expansive soil) is the capacity for volume change in a soil with a loss or gain in moisture. If the shrink-swell potential is rated moderate to high, damage to buildings, roads, and other structures can occur. Chapter 16 of the Building Code ensures structures intended for human occupancy built on expansive soils are subject to less-than-significant heaving/settling effects by requiring such development to meet specific minimum structural design standards. Chapter 18 of the Building Code reduces such impacts by requiring all development intended for human occupancy adhere to standards for excavation of foundations and retaining walls. Chapter 33 of the Building Code specifies the requirements to be fulfilled for site work, demolition, and construction, including the protection of adjacent properties from damage caused by such work. Appendix Chapter 33 of the Building Code reduces such impacts by requiring all development intended for human occupancy adhere to regulations pertaining to grading activities, including drainage and erosion control, and construction on expansive soils. The Building Code requires a site-specific geotechnical study to address soil factors, such as shrink-swell potential, that must be considered in structural design.

Impacts: As stated in Item III.A.2, above, part of the City's construction permitting process requires completed reports of soil conditions at the specific construction sites to identify potentially unsuitable soil conditions including liquefaction, subsidence, expansion, and collapse. The evaluations must be conducted by registered soil professionals, and measures to eliminate inappropriate soil conditions must be applied, depending on the soil conditions. The 2005 Herzog Geotechnical Report prepared for project development and design fulfills this requirement. The construction plans being prepared for the project incorporate the geotechnical design recommendations contained in the 2005 Herzog geotechnical Report. The geotechnical report prepared for the project site identified subsidence, expansion as potential hazards at the site and included recommendations for excavation, foundation and retaining wall construction, geotechnical drainage, and pavements. Fill required for the project would include 1,400 cubic yards of selected material to construct a new building pad for 901 Sherman Avenue, the plaza and Civic Green; 900 cubic yards of material for raising and constructing a new foundation for the 1950 Annex; and 160 cubic yards of material for filling excavations left as a result of demolishing 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. The design of foundation support is required to conform to the analysis and implementation criteria described in the Building Code, Chapters 16, 18, and A33. Adherence to the City's codes and policies would ensure the maximum practicable protection available for

users of buildings and infrastructure and their associated trenches, slopes, and foundations.

Based on the existing regulatory framework that addresses soil instability issues and adherence to the requirements of the Building Code and the recommendations contained in the 2005 Herzog Geotechnical Report, expansive soil would not be a substantial hazard at the project site. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding the potentially adverse effects of expansive soils.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV Building and Housing.

Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Geotechnical Report Update, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The project site is in an urban area that provides wastewater disposal facilities for the site and adjacent parcels (see item X III of this Initial Study, *Utilities and Service Systems*).

Impacts: The proposed project would tie into the existing wastewater disposal system. The proposed project would not use septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems. Consequently, there would be no impact related to the site soils' capacity to support such systems.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Interactive Resources: Architecture, Planning, Engineering, *Grading & Drainage Plan, 901 Sherman Avenue. Renovation, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA*, Sheet C1.2, Project Number 2007-010.02.

Novato Sanitary District website, www.novatosan.com, accessed September 12, 2007.

Personal communication with Ed Mann, Wastewater Facility Manager, Novato Sanitary District. September 11, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IV. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY – Would the project:

- A. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?

☐	☐	☒	☐
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Setting: Drainage from the project site flows overland approximately north through the parking lot to a storm drain inlet south of Cain Lane. The inlet leads to the City's stormdrain system, a series of channels and underground pipes that carry surface runoff to Rush Creek, and, eventually, to San Pablo Bay. The shallow groundwater table at the project site is at times within about four feet of the ground surface and its proximity to the San Pablo Bay results in a high interaction between local groundwater and Bay water.

Impacts: The proposed project would renovate 901 Sherman Avenue and move the building 10 to 12 feet north of its existing location; remove the buildings at 905 Sherman Avenue and 911 Sherman Avenue; construct a landscaped plaza, a civic green, and frontage landscaping up to about 7,000 square feet in area (up to 15 percent of the affected project area); and reconfigure a portion of the parking lot, street access, and associated infrastructure on the project site. These activities could alter the amount and type of pollutants in stormwater reaching the Bay, and would decrease the volume of stormwater runoff.

The project as proposed is designed to comply with National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit regulations including State Water Resources Control Board General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s (WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ; NPDES CAS000004) and Construction General Permit (WQ Order No. 98-08-DWQ). Compliance will be confirmed prior to the issuance of any grading or building permit for initiation of construction.

The proposed project is designed to and shall comply with the Water Quality Control Plan for the San Francisco Bay Region, any applicable TMDLs (mercury and PCBs), and the Policy for Implementation of Toxics Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays, and Estuaries of California (State Implementation Plan or SIP) (Resolution No. 2000-015, March 2000).

Based on the existing regulatory framework of the Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) that addresses water quality issues and adherence to the drainage and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, and based on the preliminary grading plan and project design features for reducing potential pollutants in stormwater runoff, the project would not result in a violation of water quality standards.

The proposed project would not be subject to an individual water discharge requirement; all NPDES permitted activities would be covered under the existing General Permits. Therefore, there would be no impact on water discharge requirements.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Interactive Resources: Architecture, Planning, Engineering, *Grading & Drainage Plan, 901 Sherman Avenue. Renovation, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA, Sheet C1.2, Project Number 2007-010.02.*

Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.*

PBS&J site inspections, August 23, 2007, September 6 and 14, 2007.

State Water Resources Control Board. 2003. General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ. April 30, 2003. <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/ust/regulatory/index.html#rgs> accessed September 19, 2007.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV Building and Housing.

Construction General Permit WQ Order No. 98-08-DWQ (1999).

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- B. Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g. the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?

☐	☐	☒	☐
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Setting: The project site is above the Novato Valley Basin. Recharge of this basin is primarily through infiltration from streams that originate in upland areas and by direct percolation in the valley floor. The existing land cover in the portion of the project site to be disturbed (about 46,000 square feet) is approximately 91 percent impervious surfaces, consisting of buildings, walkways, and paved parking area. There is landscaping around the buildings, along the Sherman Avenue frontage, and an area that contains several trees along Blodgett Lane totaling about 4,400 square feet. The highest groundwater level measured in the area was 3.7 feet below ground surface. Mean annual rainfall in Novato is about 26.1 inches per year with over 85 percent occurring from October through March. Topography at the site is sloping north from an elevation of approximately 30 feet above sea level at DeLong Avenue to 20 feet at Cain Lane. Drainage from the project site is northward by overland flow to a storm drain inlet south of Cain Lane.

Impacts: No wells or groundwater supplies would be developed for the proposed project; the site would continue to be served by the North Marin Water District, which obtains its water from surface water supplies such as the Russian River and Stafford Lake. As such, there would be no direct effect on the groundwater table or groundwater supplies.

According to the Grading and Drainage Layout Plan and the Schematic Landscape Plan, the proposed project would move the existing 901 Sherman building, demolish the 905 and 911 Sherman buildings, construct a patio that would replace most of the existing impervious surface, add about 1000 square feet of landscaping on the DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue frontages, and construct a Civic Green of approximately 4,200 square feet. The existing storm drain inlet south of Cain Lane would be replaced

by a new inlet in what is now Blodgett Lane and six area drains along the DeLong Avenue frontage. Drainage would continue to be channeled to the City's stormdrain system. The area of permeable surface available for percolation of precipitation and recharge to the surface aquifer would be about 100 square feet less after completion of the project compared to the current condition. The Novato Valley Basin aquifer comprises an area of about 20,500 acres. The loss of 0.2 acre of potential recharge area represents about 0.001 percent of the total surface area: a calculatable quantity, but not a statistically significant one.

A proposed subdrain to eliminate groundwater seepage into the relocated 901 Sherman Avenue building and the Annex would direct groundwater flow around the subsurface level of the structures, but would not actually remove water from the ground; the effect on the surrounding water volume and level would be negligible, and water would be prevented from entering the structures. Therefore, potential project effects on groundwater recharge and water table levels would not be substantial and impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.

Interactive Resources: Architecture, Planning, Engineering, *Grading & Drainage Plan, 901 Sherman Avenue. Renovation, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA*, Sheet C1.2, Project Number 2007-010.02.

California Department of Water Resources. 2004. *California's Groundwater*, Bulletin 118: San Francisco Bay Hydrologic Region, Novato Valley Groundwater Basin.

California Department of Water Resources State Climatologist Office. 2005. Monthly Historical Rain Data: Station Novato 8WNW. http://www.climate.water.ca.gov/climate_data/, accessed September 19, 2007.

PBS&J site inspections, August 23, 2007, September 6 and 14, 2007.

Application for Department of the Army Permit (ACOE Section 404 Permit Application, December 14, 2006).

North Marin Water District. Water Sources. <http://www.nmwd.com/novatowhere.html>, accessed September 19, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: The project site is relatively flat and drains toward the north at a grade of less than one percent. Land cover of the affected area is primarily impervious surfaces (91 percent) with minor landscaping (9 percent). Because the site nearly flat and mostly paved, it is not prone to natural erosion. Currently, drainage is conveyed to a storm drain inlet south

of Cain Lane. The estimated peak runoff is 3.3 cfs for the 100-year storm and 2.3 cfs for the 10-year storm.

Impacts: The project would include on-site construction activities, such as excavation and trenching for foundations and utilities, soil compaction and moving, and minor grading, all of which would disturb soils temporarily. Disturbed soils are susceptible to higher rates of erosion from wind and rain than the undisturbed site would be, resulting in the possibility of sediment transport from the site. Erosion and siltation affect water quality through interference with photosynthesis, oxygen exchange, and the respiration, growth, and reproduction of aquatic species. Other pollutants, such as nutrients, trace metals, and hydrocarbons, can attach to sediment and be transported to surface water, which could also contribute to degradation of water quality.

All construction activities would be subject to existing regulations, which require that the project sponsors file a Notice of Intent (NOI) to comply with the NPDES General Construction Permit, as required by the City and the RWQCB.

Post-construction development would alter drainage patterns by increasing site impervious surfaces by about 0.2 acre and by routing drainage to several small inlets. The increased impervious surfaces could increase stormwater runoff from the site that may carry sediment and erodes particles. Routing drainage to several small inlets, rather than a single larger inlet could result in lower energies of discharge that reduce erosion potential at the outlet. Because some of the site drainage would be directed to the Civic Green for infiltration, the amount of water leaving the site through surface runoff would be substantially the same as presently leaves the site.

For compliance with NPDES requirements for discharges of stormwater, the County of Marin stormwater discharges are permitted under the State Water Resources Control Board General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s (WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ; NPDES CAS000004). Compliance with this permit requires dischargers (including the City of Novato) to develop and implement a Storm Water Management Plan to reduce pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. This NPDES permit requires implementation of nonpoint source control of stormwater runoff through the application of a number of Best Management Practices (BMPs) during the construction and operational phase of the project. These BMPs are implemented to reduce the amount of pollutants, including eroded sediment, that enter streams and other water bodies. BMPs could include drainage features such as landscaping, stormwater filters, detention and filtration systems, and energy filters to treat parking lot runoff and remove potential pollutants, to treat roof top runoff, and to reduce erosion potential of discharge.

Based on the existing regulatory framework of the RWQCB that addresses water quality and erosion control issues and adherence to the drainage and the erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, erosion and sedimentation would not be substantial hazards at the project site. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding soil erosion or the loss of topsoil.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: PBS&J site inspections, August 23, 2007, September 6 and 14, 2007.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV, Building and Housing; Chapter VII Health: 7-4 Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention.

Application for Department of the Army Permit (ACOE Section 404 Permit Application), December 14, 2006.

Interactive Resources: Architecture, Planning, Engineering, *Grading & Drainage Plan, 901 Sherman Avenue. Renovation, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA, Sheet C1.2, Project Number 2007-010.02.*

State Water Resources Control Board. 2003. General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ. April 30, 2003.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: The project site is relatively flat and drains toward the north at a grade of less than one-tenth of one percent. Land cover of the affected area is primarily impervious surfaces (91 percent) with minor landscaping (9 percent). Because the site is nearly flat and mostly paved, it is not prone to natural erosion. Currently, drainage is conveyed to a storm drain inlet south of Cain Lane. The 100-year peak storm intensity (5 minute duration) in Novato is 4.56 inches per hour; the 10-year peak storm intensity is 3.12 inches per hour.

Impacts: The project would alter drainage patterns of the affected area by increasing impervious surfaces by about 0.2 acre and by routing storm drainage to several small inlets. However as indicated in the discussion under Item IV C, because some of the site drainage would be directed to the Civic Green for infiltration, the amount of water leaving the site through surface runoff would be substantially the same as presently leaves the site. Runoff from the reconfigured parking areas and rooftop drainage on the south side of the building would be directed to the project's on-site drainage facilities which would be connected to City's storm drain system: the rooftop drainage on the north side would be directed to the Civic Green. The grading and utility plans include drainage infrastructure to minimize the possibility of on-site flooding and the Novato Municipal Code includes requirements for minimizing potential for on-site flooding. Consequently, the potential project effects on on-site flooding would be less than significant.

Peak 100-year runoff could increase by 0.5 cfs for a 100-year storm and 0.3 cfs for a 10-year storm.¹⁰ This is a potential increase of about 8 percent for the 100-year storm event and about 13 percent for the 10-year storm event. Because some of the site drainage would be directed to the Civic Green for infiltration, the amount of water leaving the site through surface runoff would be substantially the same as presently leaves the site. These increases would not be sufficient to contribute to off-site flooding and would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Caltrans Storm Water Quality Preparation Manual Attachments: Attachment D. Computation Sheet for Determining Runoff Coefficients. http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/construc/stormwater/sw_attachments/attachment_d.doc, accessed September 19, 2007.

California Department of Water Resources State Climatologist Office. 2005. Rainfall Depth Duration Frequency: Station Novato 8WNW E20 6290 000. http://www.climate.water.ca.gov/climate_data/, accessed September 19, 2007.

Application for Department of the Army Permit (ACOE Section 404 Permit Application), December 14, 2006.

Interactive Resources: Architecture, Planning, Engineering, *Grading & Drainage Plan, 901 Sherman Avenue. Renovation, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA*, Sheet C1.2, Project Number 2007-010.02.

Novato Municipal Code Chapter IV: Development Standards.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: The project site is relatively flat and drains toward the north at a grade of less than one-tenth of one percent. Land cover of the affected area is primarily impervious surfaces (91 percent) with minor landscaping (9 percent). Drainage from the project site is northward by overland flow to a storm drain inlet south of Cain Lane which leads to the City's stormdrain system, a series of channels and underground pipes that carry surface runoff to Rush Creek, and, eventually, to San Pablo Bay.

Impacts: The project would develop a Civic Green and other landscaping up to about 7,000 square feet of the project site and reconfigure the existing paved parking and plaza areas. This reconfiguration would increase impervious area. As noted in Item IV.D above, this could increase peak runoff by 0.5 cfs during a 100-year storm event and 0.3 cfs for a 10-year storm event. Because some of the site drainage would be directed to the Civic Green for infiltration, the amount of water leaving the site through surface runoff would be substantially the same as presently leaves the site. Therefore the replacement inlets would deliver about the same amount or less water to the City's storm drain system than currently. Because the potential difference in storm flows are 8 and 13 percent of a small site (about an acre), potential project effects on storm drainage system capacity would be negligible and less than significant.

Decreased runoff associated with of the reconfigured impervious surfaces and infiltration area could provide fewer sources of polluted runoff. The project is designed to comply with the NPDES requirements for discharges of stormwater; the County of Marin stormwater discharges are permitted under the State Water Resources Control Board General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s (WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ; NPDES CAS000004). Compliance with this permit requires dischargers (including the City of Novato) to develop and implement a Storm Water Management Plan to reduce pollutants to the maximum extent practicable. This NPDES permit requires implementation of nonpoint source control of stormwater runoff through

the application of a number of BMPs during the construction and operational phase of the project. BMPs include drainage features such as landscaping, stormwater filters, detention and filtration systems, and energy filters to treat parking lot runoff and remove potential pollutants, to treat roof top runoff, and to reduce erosion potential of discharge. These BMPs are implemented to reduce the amount of pollutants, including eroded sediment, that enter streams and other water bodies.

Based on the existing regulatory framework of the RWQCB that addresses stormwater pollution issues and adherence to the water quality and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, the proposed project would not be expected to contribute a substantial additional source of pollution to receiving waters. In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding water pollution potential.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Application for Department of the Army Permit (ACOE Section 404 Permit Application), December 14, 2006.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV, Building and Housing; Chapter VII Health: 7-4 Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention.

Interactive Resources: Architecture, Planning, Engineering, *Grading & Drainage Plan, 901 Sherman Avenue. Renovation, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA, Sheet C1.2, Project Number 2007-010.02.*

State Water Resources Control Board. 2003. General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ. April 30, 2003.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
F. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: The project site drainage flows toward Rush Creek and into San Pablo Bay. The shallow groundwater table is at times within about four feet of the surface and its proximity to the San Pablo Bay results in a high interaction between local groundwater and Bay water.

Impacts: The proposed project would renovate 901 Sherman Avenue, moving it 10 to 12 feet north; demolish a portion of the Annex, 905 Sherman Avenue, and 911 Sherman Avenue; construct a landscaped plaza, a civic green, and frontage landscaping totaling as much as 7,000 square feet (approximately 15 percent of the affected area); and reconfigure the parking lot, street access, and associated infrastructure on the project site. These activities are required to be conducted according to the regulations of the City's Building Code, Construction General Permit, and the NPDES requirements for discharges of stormwater already described in this Initial Study.

Based on the existing regulatory framework of the NPDES Permit that addresses pollution potential and adherence to the water quality and erosion/sedimentation control requirements of Chapters 18 and A33 of the Building Code, the proposed project would not be expected to contribute a substantial additional source of water or soil pollution.

In view of these circumstances, the proposed project would have a less-than-significant impact regarding water quality degradation.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: State Water Resources Control Board. 2003. General Permit for the Discharge of Storm Water from Small MS4s WQ Order No. 2003-0005-DWQ. April 30, 2003.

Novato Municipal Code, Chapter IV, Building and Housing; Chapter VII Health: 7-4 Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
G. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The project site is not in a 100-year flood hazard area.

Impacts: There would be no impact with respect to criteria cited in item IV G above.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Association of Bay Area Governments. 2004. Bay Area Flooding Hazards. ABAG Geographic Information Services. Hazard Maps/FEMA Flood Zones. <http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/eqmaps/eqfloods/floods.html>, accessed September 19, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
H. Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The project site is not in a 100-year flood hazard area.

Impacts: There would be no impact with respect to criteria cited in item IV H above.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Association of Bay Area Governments. 2004. Bay Area Flooding Hazards. ABAG Geographic Information Services. Hazard Maps/FEMA Flood Zones. <http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/eqmaps/eqfloods/floods.html>, accessed September 19, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The proposed project site is located approximately 500 feet outside the dam failure inundation zone of Stafford Lake.

Impacts: There would be no impact with respect to criteria cited in item IV I above.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Association of Bay Area Governments. 2004. Bay Area Dam Failure Inundation Hazards. ABAG Geographic Information Services. Hazard Maps/Dam Failure Inundation Areas. <http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/eqmaps/damfailure/damfail.html>, accessed September 19, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

J. Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The project site is not near any isolated bodies of water, and thus is not subject to inundation by seiche, seismically-induced waves in lakes and reservoirs. The project site is not downgradient of a debris-flow source and therefore is not subject to mudflows. The project site is not subject to potential tsunami impacts, large ocean waves induced by seismic activity, because it is not in a tsunami evacuation area.

Impacts: There would be no impact with respect to criteria cited in item IV J above.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Association of Bay Area Governments. 2004. ABAG Tsunami Information: Tsunami Evacuation Planning Map for San Francisco & San Mateo Counties.

Association of Bay Area Governments. 2004. ABAG Landslide Hazard Maps and Information: Debris Flow Source Areas. <http://www.abag.ca.gov/bayarea/eqmaps/landslide/index.html>, accessed September 19, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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V. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES – Would the project:

A. Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The Civic Center area where the project site is located is heavily urbanized. Buildings at the Civic Center have been available for public use since 1896 thus diminishing habitat potential over time. The Civic Center and project site border the City's Grant Avenue core downtown business area. The project site consisting of the 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings is for the most part paved over with patches of mowed turf occurring in front of the three structures facing Sherman Avenue. Various ornamental shrub plantings of cedar, juniper, pine, bear's breech, Aucuba and other ornamental species are planted close to the buildings at various locations around the structures where

there is no paving. Small patches of compacted bare earth occur in several locations adjacent to the buildings.

Site inspections revealed no evidence of areas of standing water, potential ponding locations, seasonal freshwater wetland, vernal pools, riparian habitat or areas where water runoff would be expected to collect. In addition, the site area has been heavily used by pedestrians and vehicles further removing the potential for any natural habitat. No wildlife or evidence of suitable nesting habitat was observed on the project site, although the presence of raccoons, possum and rodents in the general area as a whole cannot be ruled out. Similarly, various songbird species would be expected consistent with the urban setting. The proposed project includes the removal of two black locust trees (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) having trunk diameters of approximately 23-inches. According to an arborist report prepared for the project, these particular trees exhibit significant lower trunk decay, low vigor, and branch dieback. As such, the consulting arborist recommends these trees be removed. City of Novato Municipal Code Chapter XVII regulates the removal of trees, including Heritage Trees (those trees with a trunk diameter of 24-inches or greater). Removing the locust trees as part of the project would be consistent with the limitations and procedural requirements specified in Chapter XVII. New trees will be installed as part of the proposed project. New trees will have a greater long-term benefit compared to retaining the declining black locust trees. No other trees are proposed for removal at the project site.

Due to paving, turf mowing and past disturbance, the project site does not retain the conditions of a natural community and the likelihood of any special-status plant species occurring on the project site is considered improbable. No species of plant were observed on the project site other than ornamentals installed adjacent to the three structures for appearances sake. No wildlife or evidence of wildlife species was observed as noted above

Impacts: No biological resources impacts are identified for the proposed project due to existing conditions of the project site as indicated above. Thus the project would not have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6, 2007.
MacNair & Associates, Consulting Arborists and Horticulturists, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, Tree Evaluation, April 5, 2007.

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- B. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion under item V A above. The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion under item V A above. The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion under item V A above. The project would not interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion under item V A above. The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- F. Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The project site is located within the Community Facilities (CF) designation as shown on the Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1. CF designated land uses include public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, City offices, and other civic and utility uses as well as privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses.

The project site is highly urbanized as explained previously, meaning that the site and surrounding properties at the Civic Center are primarily completely developed with structures and paving. Refer to the discussion above under item V A for additional information. There is no habitat conservation plan applicable to the project site or immediate area.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion under item V A above. The project would not conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion under item V A above.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC – Would the project:

- A. Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)?

☐	☐	☒	☐
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Setting: In the immediate vicinity of the Civic Center, existing traffic counts were conducted at the following intersections during the AM and PM peak period.

- DeLong Avenue/Redwood Boulevard/Diablo Avenue
- DeLong Avenue/Machin Avenue
- DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue
- DeLong Avenue/Reichert Avenue

- Grant Avenue/Redwood Boulevard
- Grant Avenue/Sherman Avenue
- Grant Avenue/Reichert Avenue

The traffic counts were collected and confirmed on September 12, 2007 to determine the potential traffic and circulation impacts of the 901 Sherman Avenue project under 1) existing conditions plus approved development defined herein as *Existing + Project*, as well as 2) cumulative development conditions (buildout under the City's General Plan) defined herein as *General Plan Buildout + Project*. The traffic counts were conducted while school was in session on a clear sunny day. These counts were compared to the 2002 and 2004 counts taken by W-Trans Citywide traffic model and Dowling Associates from the *Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership* (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects). As such, the updated 2007 counts confirmed existing traffic patterns to be consistent with counts taken in 2002 and 2004. Note that through movements taken in 2007 along DeLong Avenue were lower than in 2002 and 2004. To capture baseline conditions, anticipated traffic volumes to be generated by the Whole Foods project (currently under construction, anticipated to open in early 2010), was added to existing 2007 counts to capture baseline conditions when the 901 Sherman Avenue project would be operational.¹¹

During both the AM and PM peak hours, all study intersections were found to operate at acceptable levels under existing plus approved development conditions.

Impacts: *Existing + Project*

The traffic analysis reviewed the 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project's net increase in volumes and the potential impacts at the seven study intersections noted above.

Under *Existing + Project* conditions, a trip generation analysis was prepared based on the activities described in the Project Description (including # of classes, meetings/small events, and City Council Meetings). As such, the net new trips resulting from the 901 Sherman Avenue project would be 325 daily vehicle trips, which includes 50 new trips during the AM peak hour (30 inbound, 20 outbound) and 71 new trips during the PM peak hour (36 inbound, 35 outbound). This includes pass-by trips as well which are that portion of project-bound trips that pause at retail and gas station locations as intermediate stops. Given the location of a gas station and a Starbucks along DeLong Avenue (between Redwood Boulevard and Machin Avenue), pass-by trips would not reflect net new trips to the roadway adjacent to the project site.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project also includes the closure of the left-turn lane on eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue and the removal of the left-turn lane from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. This would reconfigure Sherman Avenue as a right-turn in and a right-turn out only to/from DeLong Avenue. The 901 Sherman Avenue project also includes the closure of Blodgett Lane which currently provides access to the Civic Center parking lot.

Project trips were assigned to the network based on distributions derived from the *Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership* (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects) as well as traffic engineering judgment and familiarity with the study area. Table VI-1 below presents the distribution patterns of inbound and outbound project trips.

As such, all project trips accessing the lot would use the entry/exit on Machin Avenue and were therefore distributed and assigned to the network accordingly. Note that with the closure of left-turns at the intersection of Sherman Avenue/DeLong Avenue, all

**Table VI-1
Project Trip Distribution Patterns**

Major Street	Direction Relative to the Project Site	Distribution	
		Inbound	Outbound
Grant Avenue	Northwest	10%	10%
Redwood Boulevard	Northwest	15%	15%
Diablo Avenue	Southwest	40%	40%
Redwood Boulevard	Southwest	10%	10%
Railroad Avenue	Northeast	5%	5%
DeLong Avenue	Southeast	20%	20%
Total		100%	100%

Source: PBS&J, 2007; Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods - Signature Residential Projects).

background traffic was reassigned to the intersections of Machin Avenue/ DeLong Avenue and Reichert Avenue/DeLong Avenue.¹² It is anticipated that the reassignment of traffic due to the closure of Blodgett Lane and the left-turns on eastbound DeLong Avenue and southbound Sherman Avenue would not significantly impact existing traffic patterns in the area of the project site as the roadways in the area currently operate with available capacity.

Given the small amount of traffic the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would generate as compared to existing traffic in the project area, and based on engineering judgment and familiarity with the study area, the 901 Sherman Avenue project would not be expected to change the level-of-service significantly (discussed further below) at any of the seven study intersections. Conditions with or without the project would operate at acceptable levels of service since traffic counts conducted for this study were generally lower as compared to traffic conditions as reported in the *Traffic and Parking assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods - Signature Residential Projects)* (October 2005), and the Whole Foods traffic analysis considered the Civic Center as being fully occupied as administrative offices.

The lower counts as found in this study could be attributed to seasonal variations in traffic, or there may have been changes in commute patterns. Further, the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project proposes to return public assembly use only to the Civic Center, and there are currently no plans for the return of City staff office use at the Civic Center. If this were to occur in the future, such action would be subject to a project specific CEQA review independent of the current 901 Sherman renovation project.

General Plan Build-out + Project

For the purposes of this analysis, future conditions were based on General Plan build-out¹³ with and without the project. Based on level of service conditions reported in the

Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects) (October 2005), and the limited amount of traffic to be generated by the 901 Sherman Avenue project, the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would not be expected to change the level-of-service significantly at any of the seven study intersections. More detailed General Plan build-out analysis with and without the project was performed at key intersections under section (VI.B.)

Construction Truck Traffic

At various times during the construction period, the maximum daily number of truck trips is expected to be about four per hour (inbound and outbound) for a maximum total of about 32 truck trips on a given day (16 inbound and 16 outbound).¹⁴ The demolition of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would require about one-half day of truck activity (16 total trips), and demolition related to the raising and moving of 901 Sherman Avenue and foundation demolition of the Annex would require about three days of truck activity (90 total trips).

Fill required for the project would include 1,400 cubic yards of selected material to construct a new building pad for 901 Sherman Avenue, the plaza and Civic Green, thus requiring 140 truck trips using transfer dump trucks with a capacity of 20 cubic yards each. Thus, total demolition and soil import truck trips for the project are estimated at 246 with a maximum 32 trips occurring on a given day.

The truck route would include entering and exiting U.S. 101 via DeLong Avenue. Trucks would use Machin Avenue to enter the Civic Center parking lot where construction staging would occur. Given the low per-day truck count and the fact truck activity would be spread out over the first several months of work on the project site, construction truck traffic would not represent a significant increase in traffic or adversely affect intersection or street volume to capacity ratios.

Mitigation: *Existing + Project*

No mitigation would be required.

Mitigation: *General Plan Build-out + Project*

No mitigation would be required.

Mitigation: *Construction Truck Traffic*

No mitigation would be required.

Sources: PBS&J traffic counts, September 12, 2007.

Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership. October 31, 2005.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
B. Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: The following provides a description of existing street conditions within the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project, as well as the intersection level of service standards

adopted by the City of Novato (see Section I of this Initial Study for a discussion of land uses in the project area).

- **DeLong Avenue:** A three to four lane arterial street with a center median. Currently, DeLong Avenue has two eastbound and one westbound lane between Highway 101 and Machin Avenue which splits to two westbound lanes west of Machin Avenue. As part of the Whole Foods Project, DeLong Avenue will add a second westbound travel lane between Reichert and Machin Avenues. As such, 15 parking spaces between Reichert Avenue and Machin Avenue will be removed as part of that project. In the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project, the intersections at Redwood Boulevard, Reichert Avenue and freeway ramps are signalized.
- **Grant Avenue:** A two lane street (one lane in each direction) with angled parking and bulb-outs at all intersections. In the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project All-way stops are provided at Reichert Avenue with minor street stops at Sherman Avenue and the intersection at Redwood Boulevard is signalized.
- **Sherman Avenue:** A two lane street (one lane in each direction) with angled parking and a bulb-out on the east side of the street at the intersection of DeLong Avenue. In the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project, Sherman Avenue at DeLong Avenue and Grant Avenue are “T” intersections with stop controls on Sherman Avenue. Note that currently, an eastbound left-turn lane and a southbound left-turn lane is provided at the intersection of DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue.
- **Machin Avenue:** A two lane street (one lane in each direction) with angled and parallel parking provided along both sides of the street. In the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project, Machin Avenue at DeLong Avenue is a “T” intersection with stop controls on Machin Avenue. Separated by concrete medians the intersection of DeLong Avenue/Machin Avenue has an eastbound left-turn lane and separate southbound left-turn and right-turn lanes.
- **Reichert Avenue:** A two lane street (one lane in each direction) with parallel parking provided along both sides of the street. In the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project, the intersection of Reichert Avenue/DeLong Avenue is signalized the intersection of Reichert Avenue/Grant Avenue is a Four-way stop controlled. Note that the intersection of Reichert Avenue/DeLong Avenue the westbound approach includes an unsignalized controlled right-turn lane.

Traffic operations at intersections are typically described in terms of “Level of Service” (LOS). LOS is a qualitative measure of the effect of several factors on traffic operating conditions, including speed, travel time, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, safety, driving comfort, and convenience. Intersection level of service range from LOS A, which indicates free-flow or excellent conditions with short delays per vehicle, to LOS F, which indicates congested or overloaded conditions with extremely long delays per vehicle.

Typically, analysis of intersections is conducted using methods described by the Transportation Research Board (TRB) in the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual* (HCM). For intersections, LOS is based on “control delay.” Control delay is defined as the delay directly associated with the traffic control device (i.e, a stop sign or a traffic signal) and specifically includes initial deceleration delay, queue move-up time, stopped delay, and

final acceleration delay. These delay estimates are considered meaningful indicators of driver discomfort and frustration, fuel consumption, and lost travel time. Tables VI-2 and VI-3 present the relationship between LOS and control delay for signalized and unsignalized intersections, respectively.

Table VI-2
Signalized Intersection LOS Criteria

LOS	Average Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)	Description
A	≤ 10.0	Operations with very slight delay, with no approach phase fully utilized.
B	10.1 – 20.0	Operations with slight delay, and an occasional approach phase is fully
C	20.1 – 35.0	Operations with average delay. Individual cycle failures begin to appear.
D	35.1 – 55.0	Operations with tolerable delay. Many vehicles stop and individual cycle failures are noticeable.
E	55.1 – 80.0	Operations with high delay, up to several signal cycles. Long queues form upstream of intersection.
F	> 80.0	Operation with excessive and unacceptable delays. Volumes vary widely depending on downstream queue conditions.

Source: Transportation Research Board, Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, 2000.

Table VI-3
Stop Controlled Intersection LOS Criteria

LOS	Average Control Delay (seconds/vehicle)	Description
A	≤ 10.0	Minimal delay for stop-controlled approaches.
B	10.1 – 15.0	Very light congestion; short delays.
C	15.1 – 25.0	Light congestion; average delays.
D	25.1 – 35.0	Significant congestion on critical approaches, but intersection is functional. Moderate to lengthy delays.
E	35.1 – 50.0	Severe congestion with some longstanding queues on critical approaches. Extremely lengthy delays.
F	> 50.0	Extreme congestion, with very high delays and lengthy queues unacceptable to most drivers.

Source: Transportation Research Board, Highway Capacity Manual, Special Report 209, 2000.

As stated in the Novato General Plan, the Marin County CMP establishes LOS standards and reflects multi-agency capital improvement programs. Non-freeway routes on the designated system must maintain a Level of Service (LOS) D or better on the CMP network, while the US 101 freeway is subject to a LOS E.

Also note that the Novato General Plan (TR Objective 2, Policy 4) establishes traffic Level of Service (LOS) standards for use in (1) evaluating the impacts of proposed development projects so the project can be redesigned or effective mitigation measures can be implemented, (2) making improvements to the roadway system, and (3) determining appropriate traffic impact fees.

As such the City of Novato has established LOS D as the worst case scenario at intersections with signals or four-way stop signs and LOS E at intersections with stop signs on side street only. Mitigation measures which reduce side street delay, such as traffic signals, all-way stops and/or center two-way left turn lanes will be considered when LOS F conditions are projected for side street traffic. The volume of traffic should also be considered when evaluating the severity of side street traffic operations.

The traffic study prepared for this project analyzed potential level-of-service (LOS) impacts at seven intersections. All study intersections were found to operate at acceptable levels under existing (plus approved development) conditions, which is LOS D or greater during both the AM and PM peak hours.

A level-of-service (LOS) analysis was also performed for those intersections which would be potentially impacted by closing the left-turn lanes on DeLong and Sherman Avenues.

Impacts: *Existing + Project*

Given the small amount of traffic that the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would generate, the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would not be expected to change the level-of-service significantly at any of the seven study intersections (see Section VI.A above).

Also note that peak-hour traffic signal warrants would not be met for any of the unsignalized intersections under existing (plus approved development) conditions or existing (plus approved development) plus project conditions; therefore no mitigation would be required.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project also includes the closure of the left-turn lane on eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue and the removal of the left-turn lane from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. This would reconfigure Sherman Avenue as a right-turn in and a right-turn out only to/from DeLong Avenue. The 901 Sherman Avenue project also includes the closure of Blodgett Lane which currently provides access to the Civic Center parking lot. Note that with the closure of left-turns at the intersection of Sherman Avenue/DeLong Avenue, all background traffic was reassigned to the intersections of Machin Avenue/ DeLong Avenue and Reichert Avenue/DeLong Avenue.¹⁵ During both the AM and PM peak hours, the resulting level of service at all three intersections would operate under acceptable conditions of LOS D and above with and without the left-turn closures on Sherman Avenue/DeLong Avenue. As such, no mitigation measures would be required. Table VI-4 below presents LOS and vehicle delays with and without the left-turn closures (i.e., with and without the 901 Sherman Avenue project).

Also note that peak-hour signal warrants would not be met for all four unsignalized intersections under existing (plus approved development) conditions or existing (plus approved development) plus project conditions; therefore no mitigation would be required.

Table VI-4
Existing (plus Approved Development) Conditions and
Existing (plus Approved Development) Plus Project Conditions¹
Intersection LOS

Intersection ³	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	Baseline		Baseline	
	Baseline Without Project	With Project and Reconfiguration	Baseline Without Project	With Project and Reconfiguration
	Delay (LOS)	Delay (LOS)	Delay (LOS)	Delay (LOS)
DeLong Avenue/Machin Avenue ²	15.1 (C) (SB) ⁴	17.3 (C) (SB) ⁴	22.7 (C) (SB) ⁴	25.7 (D) (SB) ⁴
DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue ²	13.8 (B) (SB) ⁴	9.3 (A) (SB) ⁴	21.7 (C) (SB) ⁴	9.1 (A) (SB) ⁴
DeLong Avenue/Reichert Avenue ³	18.3 (B)	18.3 (B)	20.0 (C)	20.3 (C)

Source: PBS&J September 2007; *Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods - Signature Residential Projects)* (October 2005).

Notes: The three intersections above represent intersections considered most likely to be potentially impacted due to the closure of the left-turns at the intersection of Sherman Avenue/DeLong Avenue. These three were considered most likely to experience traffic-related impacts due to their proximity to the 901 Sherman Avenue project, potential change in travel patterns and engineering judgment.

¹ Includes left-turn closures at the intersection of DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue.

² One-way stop controlled intersection. Eastbound and westbound traffic on DeLong Avenue does not stop.

³ Signalized intersection.

⁴ Average delay presented in seconds per vehicle. Note worst approach presented for unsignalized intersection.

General Plan Build-out + Project

Under General Plan build out conditions with and without the 901 Sherman Avenue project, the two stop-controlled locations along DeLong Avenue (at Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue) would operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS F) at the worst approach (southbound) during PM Peak hour conditions.¹⁶ It should be noted under PM Peak hour conditions, the intersection of Machin Avenue/DeLong Avenue without the 901 Sherman Avenue project would operate at unacceptable LOS F at the worst approach (southbound), but would operate acceptably at LOS C at the worst approach (southbound) with the 901 Sherman Avenue project's removal of the southbound left-turn lane. Table VI-5 below presents LOS and vehicle delays with and without the left-turn closures (i.e., with and without the Proposed Project).

Note that although the unsignalized intersection of DeLong Avenue/Machin Avenue would operate at unacceptable conditions at the worst approach (southbound), peak-hour signal warrants would not be met under General Plan build out conditions or General Plan build out plus project conditions; therefore no mitigation would be required.

Mitigation: *Existing + Project*

No mitigation would be required.

Mitigation: *General Plan Build-out + Project*

No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Novato General Plan, Chapter II Transportation (3. Objectives, Policies, and Programs, TR Objective 2, Policy 4 Level of Service Standards.), March 1996.

**Table VI-5
General Build Out Conditions and
General Build Out Plus Project Conditions¹
Intersection LOS**

Intersection ³	AM Peak Hour		PM Peak Hour	
	Without Project Delay (LOS)	With Project and Reconfiguration Delay (LOS)	Without Project Delay (LOS)	With Project and Reconfiguration Delay (LOS)
		Delay (LOS)		Delay (LOS)
DeLong Avenue/Machin Avenue ²	> 50.0 (F) (SB) ⁴	> 50.0 (F) (SB) ⁴	> 50.0 (F) (SB) ⁴	> 50.0 (F) (SB) ⁴
DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue ²	17.8 (C) (SB) ⁴	10.1 (B) (SB) ⁴	> 50.0 (F) (SB) ⁴	13.2 (B) (SB) ⁴
DeLong Avenue/Reichert Avenue ³	24.2 (C)	25.2 (C)	36.6 (D)	39.4 (D)

Source: PBS&J September 2007; *Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods - Signature Residential Projects)* (October 2005).

Notes: The three intersections above represent intersections considered most likely to be potentially impacted due to closure of the left-turns at the intersection of Sherman Avenue/DeLong Avenue. These three were considered most likely to experience traffic-related impacts due to their proximity to the 901 Sherman Avenue project, potential change in travel patterns and engineering judgment.

¹ Includes left-turn closures at the intersection of DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue.

² One-way stop controlled intersection. Eastbound and westbound traffic on DeLong Avenue does not stop.

³ Signalized intersection.

⁴ Average delay presented in seconds per vehicle. Note worst approach presented for unsignalized intersection.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- C. Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The nearest airport, Gness Field, is located 2.5 miles north-northeast of the project site. Gness Field is the Marin County Airport, staffed and maintained by the County's Public Works Department. The airport consists of 120 acres and is home base to 295 aircraft. The project site is not in the flight path of Gness Field. The project site is also not within the bounds of the Gness Field Airport Land Use Plan.

Impacts: Given that the project site is not within the Gness Field Airport Land Use Plan or within two miles of Gness Airport, or within the flight path of Gness Field, the project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.
County of Marin website, www.co.marin.ca.us, accessed September 13, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- D. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g, sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g, farm equipment)?

☐	☐	☒	☐
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Setting: Based on information provided by the Novato Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works, DeLong Avenue is a major east-west arterial and serves as the main entry point to the Downtown / Central Business District and the Civic Center area of Novato.

Impacts: The 901 Sherman Avenue project includes the addition of a sidewalk bulb-out at the southwest corner of Sherman Avenue at the intersection of DeLong Avenue and Sherman Avenue. The width of the existing, two-lane, Sherman Avenue is approximately 40 feet wide. Given typical lane widths in the vicinity of the 901 Sherman Avenue project (designed as ten to twelve-foot lanes), there is substantial right of way for the proposed sidewalk bulb-out. As such, the 901 Sherman Avenue project would not substantially increase hazards due to this design feature as it will improve the safety of the intersection for both vehicles and pedestrians.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project also includes the closure of the left-turn lane on eastbound DeLong Avenue to northbound Sherman Avenue and the removal of the left-turn lane from southbound Sherman Avenue to eastbound DeLong Avenue. This would reconfigure Sherman Avenue as a right-turn in and a right-turn out only to/from DeLong Avenue. As such, the 901 Sherman Avenue project would not substantially increase hazards due to this design feature.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project also includes the closure of Blodgett Lane which currently provides access to the Civic Center parking lot. This closure would have project trips only accessing the lot to/from Machin Avenue, but would not substantially increase hazards in the area.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Engineering and Traffic Survey, Engineering Division, Department of Public Works, City of Novato. August 30, 2005.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- E. Result in inadequate emergency access?

☐	☐	☒	☐
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Setting: Access to the project site is via the driveway from Machin Avenue, and on-street parking on Sherman Avenue.

Impacts: For emergency access, the project site can be accessed from the driveway and parking lot via Machin Avenue, the north side of DeLong Avenue between Machin Avenue and Sherman Avenue and the west side of Sherman Avenue. Two westbound lanes are anticipated at DeLong Avenue/Sherman Avenue as part of the Whole Foods Project, therefore one lane can be used for temporary emergency vehicle access.

Note that the existing raised median on DeLong Avenue would be extended as part of the 901 Sherman Avenue project to prevent left turns from DeLong Avenue onto Sherman Avenue. This new extended median section is planned to be designed to allow emergency vehicle access from eastbound DeLong Avenue to the site.

Closure of the median on DeLong Avenue would result in employees and residents at 916 Sherman Avenue and 804 DeLong Avenue to take an alternative route to reach emergency services at Novato Community Hospital. For the businesses on Sherman Avenue and residents at 916 Sherman Avenue, the most likely alternative path of travel would be taking eastbound Grant Avenue to Reichert Avenue to reach eastbound DeLong Avenue. Alternatively, Blodgett Lane between Sherman Avenue and Reichert Avenue could be used to reach eastbound DeLong Avenue. These alternative paths of travel are not considered to significantly delay access to emergency services. Utilizing the signal controlled intersection at Reichert Avenue and DeLong Avenue would likely prove to be a safer, more expedient emergency route than attempting to cross eastbound and westbound traffic on DeLong Avenue from southbound Sherman Avenue. With respect to the residence at 804 DeLong Avenue, the alternative path of emergency egress would most likely include taking Sherman Avenue northbound to either Blodgett Lane (between Sherman Avenue and Reichert Avenue) or Grant Avenue eastbound to Reichert Avenue. Again, this path of travel is not considered to significantly delay access to emergency services.

As such, it is anticipated that the reassignment of traffic due to the closure of Blodgett Lane and the left-turns on eastbound DeLong Avenue and southbound Sherman Avenue would not significantly impact emergency access in the area of the project site as the roadways in the area currently operate with available capacity.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Department of Community Development, 901 Restoration Project Description (27 Aug. 2007).

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
F. Result in inadequate parking capacity?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: The current Civic Center parking area contains parking spaces for approximately 66 City and employee vehicles. On-street parking is also available along Sherman Avenue, Machin Avenue and Grant Avenue and Cain Lane and the Zenk parking lot located on Reichert Avenue between Cain Lane and Blodgett Lane. The on-street parking in the area has parking occupancies ranging from 17.4% to 60.4% throughout the day¹⁷. As such, an additional supply of parking is available for the 901 Sherman Avenue project

The Novato Municipal Code requires one parking space for every 50 square feet (SF) of assembly area, classrooms, meeting rooms, etc. Based on these requirements, the 901 Sherman Avenue project (consisting of 2,119 SF of assembly area) would be required to provide 42 parking spaces.

The Novato Municipal Code requires that places of public assembly shall provide bicycle parking spaces equal a minimum of 10 percent of the required vehicle spaces, distributed to serve customers, visitors and employees. As such, the 901 Sherman Avenue project would be required to provide four bicycle spaces.

The Novato Municipal Code requires a minimum of one motorcycle parking space to be provided for each 50 automobile spaces or fraction thereof. As such the 901 Sherman Avenue project would be required to provide two motorcycle spaces.

The Novato Municipal Code requires uses with less than 10,000 gross square feet of floor area to provide one loading space (which may be combined with parking spaces). As such the 901 Sherman Avenue project would be required to provide one loading space. Given the expected uses for the 901 Sherman Avenue project it is anticipated that loading/unloading would periodically involve catering vehicles and personal cars.

According to the Novato Municipal Code and ADA requirements, a minimum of three handicap accessible parking spaces would be required.

Impact: Based on the number of vehicle trips generated by the 901 Sherman Avenue project (including both long-term employee and short-term visitor parking), a peak parking demand of 36 vehicles (assumes an average occupancy of one person per vehicle) was estimated during the PM peak hour. Per the Project Description, the parking demand assumes that there would be a minimum half-hour between programs for set up, removal or other custodial services, therefore classes, meetings and other activities would not occur simultaneously.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project would eliminate approximately 11 spaces located at the site and provide an additional three-parking stalls on Sherman Avenue where Blodgett Lane would be closed. This would result in a net 57 parking spaces to be provided at the Civic Center.

As such, based on the 42 spaces required by the municipal code, the project would meet code. Also note, based on the peak parking demand estimate, there would be a surplus of around 21 spaces provided at the Civic Center during the PM peak hour (57 minus 36 parking spaces). It is anticipated that the Civic Center lot may also be used for City Police Department parking and other City services similar to current use during the day.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project would also provide bicycle, loading and handicap accessible spaces consistent with the municipal code. Therefore the project would result in no impact related to parking capacity.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Novato Municipal Codes: 19.30.040 *Number of Parking Spaces Required*,
19.30.090 *Bicycle Parking and Support Facilities*,
19.30.100 *Motorcycle Parking*,
19.30.110 *Loading Space Requirements*.

ADA Accessibility Guidelines. 4.1.2 (5)(a) for minimum number of Accessible Spaces.

Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership. October 31, 2005.

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Potentially
Significant
Impact

Less Than
Significant
with Mitigation
Incorporation

Less Than
Significant
Impact

No
Impact

- G. Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g. bus turnouts, bicycle racks)? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: Access to transit services is provided in the project vicinity by Golden Gate Transit (Basic Bus Route 80 along DeLong Avenue and Redwood Boulevard).

Impacts: The 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation project would not require the removal of access to transit and would provide space for bicycle parking as discussed above. The project would thus not conflict with policies, plans, or programs supportive of alternative transportation.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: “City of Novato, About Novato.” http://www.cityofnovato.org/about_nov.cfm
“Golden Gate Transit Services.” <http://goldengatetransit.org/services/#maps>

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially
Significant
Impact

Less Than
Significant
with Mitigation
Incorporation

Less Than
Significant
Impact

No
Impact

VII. AIR QUALITY – Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:

- A. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Setting: The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has adopted a number of air quality plans and rules and regulations as needed to achieve the federal and state air quality standards and meet other air quality obligations. In its most recent air quality planning actions, on November 16, 2005 BAAQMD adopted its *Particulate Matter Implementation Schedule*, pursuant to California Senate Bill 656, to implement further feasible measures to control emissions of particulate matter. On January 4, 2006, BAAQMD adopted the *2005 Ozone Strategy* to identify further steps needed to continue reducing the public’s exposure to unhealthy levels of ozone. The BAAQMD has begun a process to update the *2005 Ozone Strategy*. The 2007 Ozone Strategy will be prepared as a roadmap showing how the Bay Area will achieve compliance with the State 1-hour and 8-hour air quality standards for ozone as expeditiously as possible, and how the region will reduce transport of ozone and ozone precursors to neighboring air basins. The BAAQMD plans to issue a final draft of the *2007 Ozone Strategy* in late 2007 and to bring it to the BAAQMD’s governing board for approval.

Impacts: Vehicular emissions would be the primary source of air quality impacts associated with the 901 Sherman Avenue project. The BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines (December 1999) provide criteria for judging a project’s potential for air quality impacts and/or conflicts with regional air quality improvement plans. According to the Guidelines, any project that would generate 80 lbs/day or more of ozone precursors or PM₁₀ from associated vehicular or stationary sources would have a potential for significant air quality impacts

that could conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Bay Area's ozone or particulate attainment strategies. The BAAQMD *CEQA Guidelines* also provides methodologies for estimating the emissions and ambient concentration of criteria air pollutants, and provides significance criteria for judging their significance. As demonstrated in the discussion of Item VII B below, the 901 Sherman Avenue project would not exceed the BAAQMD's threshold levels for adverse air quality impacts. Therefore, no significant air quality impacts due to vehicular emissions are anticipated.

As the 901 Sherman Avenue project would not be expected to result in significant emissions of ozone, ozone precursors, or particulate matter, the project would therefore not conflict with or obstruct the implementation of the BAAQMD's air quality plans.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: BAAQMD, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, December 1999.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
B. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: Air quality is monitored and regulated by federal, state, and regional regulatory agencies, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the California Air Resources Board (CARB), and the BAAQMD. The EPA, CARB, and the BAAQMD develop rules and/or regulations to attain the goals or directives imposed by legislation. Both state and regional regulations may be more, but not less, stringent than federal regulations. The CARB establishes state ambient air quality standards and motor vehicle emission standards, conducts research, and oversees the activities of regional Air Pollution Control Districts and Air Quality Management Districts. Ambient air quality standards are established for criteria pollutants, which include ozone, carbon monoxide (CO), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), particulate matter, and lead. Reactive organic gases (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions are also regulated because they are precursors to ozone formation. With regard to particulate matter, air quality standards have been adopted for suspended particulate matter less than ten microns in diameter (PM₁₀) as well as for smaller respirable particles that are 2.5 microns in diameter or less (PM_{2.5}). The San Francisco Bay Area air basin, which includes the City of Novato, is designated as non-attainment for ozone under both state and federal standards and non-attainment for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} under state standards, meaning that the Bay Area does not meet the air quality standards for these air pollutants. According to the BAAQMD Guidelines, any project that would generate 80 lbs/day or more of ozone precursors of particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) from associated vehicular or stationary sources would have a potential for significant air quality impacts that could conflict with or obstruct implementation of the Bay Area's ozone or particulate attainment strategies.

Impacts: Construction activities associated with the 901 Sherman Avenue project could generate fugitive dust (a fraction of which would be PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) from grading, demolition and other construction activities. Dust and equipment exhaust generated by construction activities can pose a potential nuisance and hazard to nearby sensitive land uses. Therefore, dust emission from construction activities could have a potentially significant impact on local PM₁₀ levels, and motor vehicle emissions, which contain the ozone

precursors NO_x and ROG, could have a potentially significant impact on regional ozone levels. However, implementation of BAAQMD recommended control measures, to be included in the demolition, construction and renovation contracts for the project, as specified below, would reduce potentially significant localized dust emissions to a less-than-significant level. Emissions of NO_x and ROG would be generated from operation of construction equipment, but the ozone precursors in construction equipment exhaust are already included in the emission inventories of the Bay Area's air quality plans and would have a less than significant impact on attainment and maintenance of the ozone standards.

While the 901 Sherman Avenue project would result in ground disturbing activities that could temporarily increase PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations near the project site during relocation of the existing building and demolition of the existing structures at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, such emissions would be effectively controlled to prevent ambient air quality standards violations by implementing the measures which the project proposes to be included in demolition and construction contracts as specified below.

Those measures which are proposed to be included in demolition and construction contracts to which the contractors would be required to comply include:

- Water all exterior surfaces of buildings to be removed during demolition.
- Water all active construction areas at least twice daily.
- Cover all trucks hauling soil, sand, and other loose materials or require all trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard.
- Pave, apply water three times daily, or apply (non-toxic) soil stabilizers on all unpaved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
- Sweep daily (with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas and staging areas at construction sites.
- Sweep streets daily (with water sweepers) if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent public streets.

According to the BAAQMD *CEQA Guidelines*, implementation of the measures above would keep localized dust emissions to a less-than-significant level.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project would result in a net new trip generation of approximately 325 daily motor vehicle trips. Estimates of daily operational emissions have been obtained using the URBEMIS 2007 computer model as recommended by the BAAQMD. The estimated daily emissions associated with operation of the project are shown below in Table VII-1. As shown, the average daily emissions from all project operational sources would not exceed the thresholds of significance recommended by BAAQMD. Therefore, the project would not generate a substantial amount of pollutant emissions and would have a less than significant impact related to these pollutants.

Table VII-1
Project Daily Operational Stationary and Mobile Source Emissions

Emission Source	Emissions in Pounds Per Day				
	ROG	NOx	CO	SO ₂	PM ₁₀
Stationary	0.28	0.07	3.23	0.00	0.01
Mobile	5.31	7.68	69.61	0.05	9.05
Total Emissions	5.59	7.75	72.84	0.05	9.06
BAAQMD Thresholds	80.00	80.00	NT	NT	80.00
Significant Impact?	No	No	NT	NT	No

Source: PBS&J, 2007. Based on the URBEMIS 2007 emissions model using year 2008 emission factors.

Note: NT = No threshold.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: BAAQMD, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, December 1999

———. 2006. *Bay Area 2005 Ozone Strategy*. San Francisco, CA.

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- C. Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: According to the BAAQMD, the project site is located in an area that is in nonattainment for federal ozone standards and is in nonattainment for California ozone and particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) standards. For judging the cumulative significance of the project's ozone precursor emissions (i.e., ROG and NO_x), the cumulative context would be all other development occurring in the Bay Area. All ozone precursor emissions from all development sources contribute to the regional ozone problem, which is addressed by the attainment strategies of the BAAQMD. According to the *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, development projects are considered to be cumulatively significant if the project requires a change in the existing land use designation (i.e., general plan amendment or re-zoning) and the emissions of ozone precursors (i.e., ROG and NO_x), with the project are greater than the emissions anticipated for the site if developed under the existing land use designation.

Impacts: The 901 Sherman Avenue project would not require a general plan amendment or a zoning change from the site's current Community Facilities land use designation. The daily use of the project site would result in an overall increase in traffic in the project area that would result in increased ozone precursors and PM emissions. As demonstrated above in the discussion of item VII B, ozone precursor and PM emissions from project-related stationary and mobile sources would fall far short of the BAAQMD's 80 lbs/day significance threshold.

Moreover, air pollutant emissions from the 901 Sherman Avenue project would be a relatively small proportion of the total City of Novato and Bay Area cumulative emissions. Therefore, the 901 Sherman Avenue project's contribution to air pollutant emissions would be less than cumulatively considerable and the 901 Sherman Avenue project's air pollutant emissions would not be individually significant. Therefore, the 901 Sherman Avenue project's cumulative air quality impacts would be less than significant.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: BAAQMD, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, December 1999.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: Vehicles idling in close proximity to each other at traffic intersections can cause CO "hot spots" – localized areas where CO concentrations are higher than the surrounding region. The federal and state ambient air quality standard for 8-hour CO concentrations is 9.0 ppm. The BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines recommends that the CO concentration be estimated near intersections when project traffic would impact those intersections and cause them to operate at Level of Service (LOS) D or worse.

The Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Program (ATHS) established under Assembly Bill 2588 require companies throughout California to provide information to their neighbors on emissions of toxic air compounds (TACs) and the health risks they pose. Also, through its *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective* (April 2005), the CARB has identified major TAC sources (e.g, freeways, large warehouses/distribution centers, rail yards, etc.) and recommends specific "buffer zones" to protect nearby sensitive receptors. The BAAQMD currently implements a variety of programs that reduce TAC emissions and exposures. The BAAQMD's Air Toxics "Hot Spots" program is designed to identify industrial and commercial emitters of toxic air contaminants and encourage reductions in these emissions. The BAAQMD also has a Community Air Risk Evaluation (CARE) program to estimate health risks associated with exposure to outdoor TACs in the Bay Area.¹⁸

Impacts: Increases in traffic from the 901 Sherman Avenue project would contribute to localized CO emissions. There are existing occupied homes (sensitive receptors) in the project area at 916 Sherman Avenue, 804 DeLong Avenue and at various locations along the south side of DeLong Avenue in the project area. Using a simplified CALINE4 screening model, developed by the BAAQMD, the 8-hour CO concentration at 50 feet from the nearby intersections were estimated during the PM peak hour under existing, existing + project, and General Plan buildout conditions, as shown in Table VII-2. These concentrations would be below the federal and state 8-hour standard of 9 ppm.¹⁹ Therefore, CO impacts would be less than significant.

The project site is not located within the buffer zones of major TAC sources as identified by the CARB's *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook*. In this area, the major TAC source of concern would be the US 101; the project site is setback greater than 500 feet from US 101. Based on industrial source-specific TAC inventories provided to the

Table VII-2
Motor Vehicle Eight-Hour Average Carbon Monoxide Concentrations (ppm)

Intersection	Existing (2007)	Existing+ Project (2008)	General Plan Buildout (2030)
DeLong Avenue / Machin Avenue	2.1	2.1	1.9
DeLong Avenue / Sherman Avenue	2.1	2.0	1.9
DeLong Avenue / Reichert Avenue	2.1	2.1	1.9

Source: PBS&J, 2007.

Notes: CO concentrations were calculated using a simplified CALINE4 screening procedure developed by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and the worst-case CO background levels recommended by the BAAQMD in their *CEQA Guidelines*.

BAAQMD, as required by AB2588, and subsequent health risk assessments, no industrial TAC sources in Novato posed sufficient risk to their neighbors that would require notification as mandated by AB2588. Industrial TAC sources on the BAAQMD list in Novato include 10 dry cleaning facilities, sources of the TAC perchloroethylene. Also on the list are the Novato Sanitary District, Redwood Landfill Inc, and Valley Memorial Park. None of their TAC emissions are severe enough to trigger AB2588 notification requirements.

Therefore, there would be no significant exposure of on-site receptors to TAC emissions from the local roadways resulting in a less-than-significant impact related to TACs.

Control of the potential dispersion of hazardous materials during project demolition and renovation is discussed in Section XIV of this Initial Study, *Hazardous and Hazardous Materials*.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: BAAQMD, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, December 1999.

———. 2003. *Toxic Air Contaminant Control Program Annual Report*. http://www.baaqmd.gov/pmt/air_toxics/annual_reports/index.htm, Accessed September 18, 2007.

California Environmental Protection Agency. California Air Resources Board. 2005. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Handbook*. Sacramento, CA.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☒	☐
Setting: The BAAQMD has identified wastewater treatment plants, sanitary landfills, manufacturing plants, etc. as prime sources of odors.				
Impacts: The land uses surrounding the project site are not among the land uses that the BAAQMD has identified as prime sources of odors. Employees, patrons, and nearby residents may experience occasional odors from diesel equipment exhaust and the application of architectural coatings during construction. These effects, however, would				

be short term, intermittent, and contingent on wind conditions. The generation of diesel odors during construction would occur during daytime hours only and would be isolated to the immediate vicinity of the construction site and activity, and these emissions would not affect a substantial amount of people; therefore, the impact is considered less than significant.

Odors may also be emitted from landscape maintenance equipment and trash containers at the renovated facility. Odors from landscape equipment would be short term, intermittent, and dependent on wind conditions. Odors from trash containers could be controlled by assuring that they are kept tightly closed and that the trash would be picked up frequently. A trash container has historically been, and is currently used at the project site. City staff has experienced no objectionable odor complaints while occupying the site. The City insures that trash bins are kept in good repair and that trash is picked up regularly at scheduled intervals.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: BAAQMD, *BAAQMD CEQA Guidelines*, December 1999.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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VIII. NOISE – Would the project result in:

- A. Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? ☐ ☐ ☒ ☐

Setting: Land use in the vicinity of the project site is varied and includes community facilities, retail stores, offices, restaurants, and residential properties. Retail stores and offices are located north of the project site on Grant Avenue. Residential properties are located south of the project site across DeLong Avenue. Additional community facilities and a restaurant (i.e., Starbucks) are located west of the project site across Machin Avenue.

The primary existing noise source in the project vicinity is motor vehicle traffic on local roads. Although the Gness Field Airport is located approximately 2.5 miles north of the project site, the airport is used primarily by small, private aircraft and existing flight patterns route planes away from the downtown area. Therefore, airplane noise from Gross Field is unnoticeable at the project site. There are no heavy industrial uses generating excessive noise.

The following policies and programs from the City of Novato's Safety and Noise Chapter of the General Plan would apply to the 901 Sherman Avenue project. The Novato Municipal Code provides additional noise guidelines.²⁰

According to the General Plan, for meeting halls, an exterior L_{dn} of 60 dBA or less is considered "normally acceptable"; an exterior L_{dn} of 60 to 75 dBA is considered "conditionally acceptable"; and, L_{dn} greater than 75 is considered "unacceptable". For parks, an exterior L_{dn} of 65 dBA or less is considered "normally acceptable"; an exterior L_{dn} of 65 to 80 dBA is considered "conditionally acceptable"; and, an exterior L_{dn} greater than 80 L_{dn} is considered "unacceptable". For office buildings, business commercial, and professional, an exterior L_{dn} of 70 dBA or less is considered "normally acceptable"; an exterior L_{dn} of 71 to 80 dBA is considered "conditionally acceptable";

and, an exterior L_{dn} greater than 80 dBA is considered “unacceptable”. For residential properties, an exterior L_{dn} of 60 dBA or less is considered “normally acceptable”; an L_{dn} of 60 to 75 dBA is considered “conditionally acceptable”; and, an L_{dn} of 75 or above is considered “unacceptable”.

The Novato Municipal Code Section 19.22.070 provides time restrictions for all construction activities as authorized by the Department of Community Development. Construction activities would not be permitted between 6:00 pm and 7:00 am on weekdays, between 5:00 pm and 10:00 am on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or on official federal national holidays.

The primary noise source at the project site is traffic on DeLong Avenue. A one-hour noise measurement was taken by Rosen Goldberg Der & Lewitz, Inc. at the proposed future setback of the 901 Sherman Avenue building on April 23, 2007 during the pm peak commute hour. The average noise level (L_{eq}) over the one-hour period was 73 dBA. Since the L_{dn} along arterial roadways is typically equal to the peak hour L_{eq} , the L_{dn} is approximately 73 dBA at the proposed future setback of the 901 Sherman Avenue. The traffic noise at the site is near the upper limit of the City’s “conditionally acceptable” range for meeting halls. Traffic noise along DeLong Avenue is also near the upper limit of the “conditionally acceptable” range for the residential properties located along the south side of DeLong Avenue; however, these properties are set further back from the road than 901 Sherman Avenue, and consequently their noise exposure would be lower.

Impacts: After the 901 Sherman Avenue project is completed, the project-related traffic would add to the existing traffic flows and increase traffic-related ambient noise levels. As shown in checklist item VI of this Initial Study, *Transportation/Traffic*, the 901 Sherman Avenue project would increase both peak hour and daily traffic volumes on local streets. The maximum project-related increase would be on DeLong Avenue where the project would add approximately 28 new trips during the PM peak hour, an increase of approximately 1.6 percent. This would increase peak hour and 24-hour average traffic noise along DeLong Avenue by about 0.1 dBA, an amount insignificant by any standard.

The 901 Sherman Avenue project would not add a land use to the project site that is inappropriate to its long-term noise exposure, nor would project traffic noise sources contribute substantially to a significant permanent increase in outdoor noise levels in the project area. The City commissioned an acoustical analysis report prepared by Rosen, Goldberg, Der and Lewitz (2007) to assist in the design and development of the project. The 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project has been designed to incorporate the noise control measures recommended in the report including:

- Adding 3.5 inch thick batt insulation in the stud cavities of the exterior wall
- Replacing (or upgrade) 901 Sherman Avenue windows facing DeLong Avenue to provide a minimum sound transmission class (STC) rating of 38.
- Including an air conditioning or ventilation system to provide a habitable interior environment when the windows are closed for noise control.

In view of the above, the project would not expose persons to or generate noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: City of Novato. 2003. *City of Novato General Plan*. Novato, CA.

———. 2006. *City of Novato Municipal Code*. Novato, CA.

Rosen Goldberg Der & Lewitz, Inc. 11 May 2007. *Novato City Council Chambers – Traffic Noise*.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
B. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: Vibrating objects in contact with the ground radiate energy through that medium; if a vibrating object is massive enough and/or close enough to the observer, its vibrations are perceptible. The ground motion caused by vibration is measured in vibration decibels (VdB). The vibration threshold of perception for humans is approximately 65 VdB; at 75 VdB, vibrations become distinctly perceptible to many people; at 100 VdB, minor damage can occur in fragile buildings.

The most common sources of ground-borne vibration in urban environments are heavy trucks traveling on rough roads and construction activities, such as pile driving and the operation of heavy earth-moving equipment. The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has developed extensive methodologies and significance criteria for the evaluation of vibration impacts from construction activities.

Impacts: There are no residential or other vibration-sensitive uses on or immediately adjacent to the project site. The nearest existing vibration-sensitive uses are residential properties on the south side of DeLong Avenue, and a single residence at 916 Sherman Avenue. The only place where ground-borne vibration impacts could occur would be the retail and office buildings on the adjoining properties immediately north and west of the project site. Ground-borne vibration at the project site would result from the movement of supply trucks and construction equipment on the project site. Activities that typically cause the most substantial ground vibration, such as pile driving and blasting, are not proposed for this project. Of the construction equipment likely to be used on site, loaded trucks and small earthmovers are the most likely to produce perceptible vibration in areas close to where they would operate.

As outlined in the Novato Municipal Code, vibrations resulting from activities (including construction) of a property must be kept to a level where they cannot be noticed without the use of instrumentation. According to the Federal Transit Administration's *Transit Noise and Vibration Assessment*, ground-borne vibration begins to become perceptible by humans at around 78 VdB in a quiet setting. Based on the construction vibration assessment methodology contained in the FTA's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*, vibration levels for loaded trucks, jackhammers, and small earthmovers at varying distances are presented in Table VIII-1.

As shown in Table VIII-1, vibration from loaded trucks would fall below the 78 VdB threshold between 25 and 50 feet from construction activities. Ground vibration would be barely noticeable at the property line and would not be noticeable in the closest residential buildings.

**Table VIII-1
Vibration Levels for Construction Equipment**

Construction Equipment	VdB ^a				
	25 Feet	50 Feet	60 Feet	75 Feet	100 Feet
Loaded Trucks	86	77	76	72	68
Jack Hammer	79	70	68	65	61
Small Earthmover	58	49	47	44	40

Source: Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment, *Federal Transit Administration, May 2006.*

Note:

^a VdB = vibration decibels.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: US Department of Transportation. Federal Transit Administration. 2006. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. Washington D.C.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: As noted above in the discussion item VIII A, the project would result in a permanent but less than significant increase in traffic on local roads, with a consequent less than significant increase in traffic noise.

Impacts: As noted above in the discussion of item VIII A, additional motor vehicle traffic is not anticipated to result in a substantial increase in traffic noise along DeLong Avenue between Sherman Avenue and Machin Avenue and would only result in a slight (0.1 dBA) increase in ambient noise in the project vicinity. Therefore, the project would not result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: City of Novato. 2003. *City of Novato General Plan*. Novato, CA.

———. 2006. *City of Novato Municipal Code*. Novato, CA.

Rosen Goldberg Der & Lewitz, Inc. 11 May 2007. *Novato City Council Chambers – Traffic Noise*.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	☒	☐

Setting: In accordance with the City of Novato Municipal Code, all construction activities as authorized by the Department of Community Development, including warming-up or

servicing of equipment, and any preparations for construction are restricted to taking place between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on weekdays, and between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays, with no construction allowed on Sundays or official federal national holidays, except as otherwise authorized by the Community Development Director. Grading activities and equipment operations are restricted to between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. weekdays only, when city inspectors are available.

Impacts: Noise generated by construction would be the greatest during site preparation activities, building demolition and excavation for underground utilities. Pile driving is not anticipated to be employed as a construction method. Typical maximum noise levels from site preparation, demolition and excavation activities typically range from 70 to 90 dBA at a distance of 50 feet from the source. Typical hourly average construction generated noise levels are about 75 to 85 dBA measured at a distance of 50 feet from the center of the site during busy construction periods.

The noise-sensitive uses nearest to the project site include residential properties located at 916 Sherman Avenue, 804 DeLong Avenue and the south side of DeLong Avenue. Typical maximum noise levels experienced at the residences to the south from construction activities would range from 60 to 85 dBA. Typical hourly average construction generated noise levels are anticipated to be about 70 to 80 dBA when construction activities are located adjacent to receptors during busy construction periods.

The City's contracts with demolition, construction and renovation contractors will provide for specific noise reduction measures designed to control noise emissions in the project area and reduce noise emissions on sensitive receptors. Such measures will include the following:

- Noise-generating construction activities, including truck traffic coming to and from the site for any purpose, warming-up or servicing of equipment, demolition, and any preparation for construction, shall be limited to weekdays and Saturdays between 10:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- Grading activities and equipment operations shall be limited to weekdays between 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., when City inspectors are available.
- All equipment driven by internal combustion engines shall be equipped with mufflers which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.
- The construction contractor shall utilize "quiet" models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.
- At all times during project demolition, grading and construction, stationary noise-generating equipment shall be located as far as practicable from sensitive receptors and placed so that emitted noise is directed away from residences.
- Unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines shall be prohibited.
- The construction contractor shall designate a "noise disturbance coordinator" who will be responsible for responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The disturbance coordinator would determine the cause of the noise complaint (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and institute reasonable measures as warranted to correct the problem. A telephone number for the disturbance coordinator shall be conspicuously posted at the construction site.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: US Department of Transportation. Federal Transit Administration. 2006. *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment*. Washington D.C.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The nearest airport, Gness Field, is located 2.5 miles north-northeast of the project site. Gness Field is the Marin County Airport, staffed and maintained by the County's Public Works Department. The airport consists of 120 acres and is home base to 295 aircraft. The airport adheres to noise abatement procedures that avoid overflight of residential areas south-southeast of the airport. As a result, the project site is not in the flight path of Gness Field. The project site is also not within the bounds of the Gness Field Airport Land Use Plan.

Impacts: Given that the project site is not within the Gness Field Airport Land Use Plan or within the flight path of Gness Field, the project would not expose people to excessive noise levels within the area of an airport land use plan.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.
County of Marin website, www.co.marin.ca.us, accessed September 13, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
F. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: There are no private airstrips within the vicinity of the project site.

Impacts: The proposed project site is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. As described in item VII E, above, the nearest airport, Gness Field, is located 2.5 miles north-northeast of the project site. Therefore, the project would not expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels within the vicinity of a private airstrip.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.
County of Marin website, www.co.marin.ca.us, accessed September 13, 2007.

California State Automobile Association, Novato and Vicinity Map, Copyright 2004.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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IX. AESTHETICS – Would the project:

A. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista? ☒ ☐ ☐ ☐

Setting: The project site is located within the approximate two-acre Novato Civic Center. The entire area is developed with urban land uses. The Civic Center and project site are located immediately south of the City’s Grant Avenue core downtown business area. Land uses surrounding the project area are primarily commercial retail mixed with service establishments, restaurants, office buildings and several residences.

The project site is located in the “Central Neighborhood” district, according to Appendix A of the General Plan entitled *Novato Neighborhoods*. The Central Neighborhood includes downtown Novato and the Civic Center. Mt. Burdell and adjacent hillside areas are visible in the background to the north from many locations around the Civic Center area, including locations near the project site. As noted in Appendix A, “Various hills provide a scenic backdrop for the urban development east of downtown, and in the northwest and southwest parts of the district. Plan policies require that views be protected in any development project.”

There are no City of Novato designated scenic vista points from which to enjoy views in the project area.

Impacts: Lifting the 901 Sherman Avenue building off its foundation and moving the structure north of its current location is intended to provide a greater setback from vehicle traffic traveling DeLong Avenue. Without building relocation and with the planned lane reconfiguration along DeLong Avenue, vehicle traffic would be within approximately six-feet of the south wall of the 901 Sherman Avenue building were it to remain in its current location.

It has not been determined if building relocation would lead to the restriction of views of the landmark structure from westbound motorists on DeLong Avenue. Similarly, the impact on views to eastbound motorists along DeLong Avenue and southbound motorist along Sherman Avenue has not been determined as a result of the project. Notably, the change in views at this major DeLong Avenue westbound entry to Novato would require additional detailed study as a result of relocating 901 Sherman Avenue and removing the adjacent 908 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings. Additionally, further investigations would be required to ascertain the impacts on views of Mt. Burdell and adjacent hillsides in the project area with project completion. The obstruction of views to the 901 Sherman Avenue building in its relocated position as a result of existing structures and vegetative masses would require further evaluation as well.

A determination would need to be made as to whether the structure would continue to signal a major entry to the City along westbound DeLong Avenue upon project completion. The affect of building relocation on sight lines along DeLong Avenue and sense of movement through the area would also require further evaluation.

Mitigation: No mitigation is identified at this time. The project will require a detailed in-depth analysis in an EIR to determine potential aesthetic impacts.

Sources: Site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6, 2007.

City of Novato, 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project, Schematic Design, prepared by Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers, April 23, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- B. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: There are no state designated scenic highways in the project area. State Highway 37 east of U.S. 101 which originates several miles southeast of the project site is listed by the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as an Eligible State Scenic Highway, Not Officially Designated. While 901 Sherman Avenue is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places no scenic highways are in the vicinity of the project site; therefore, no trees, rock outcroppings or historic resources on the project site are visible from a state scenic highway.

Impacts: Shifting the 901 Sherman Avenue building 10 to 12 feet north of its present location and renovating the structure while retaining the majority of its original exterior architectural character would not damage the building's significance as a visual landmark structure (see the discussion under item IX A above and item X below, *Cultural Resources*). While the adjacent buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue may be historic resources under CEQA as contributors to an adopted historic district, their removal would not constitute a significant visual impact under impact criterion IX B as noted above regarding a scenic resource within a state scenic highway. Therefore the project would not substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Email memorandum to Ted Adams, EIP Associates, from Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato community Development Department, August 27, 2007.

Site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6, 2007.

City of Novato, 901 Sherman Avenue Renovation Project, Schematic Design, prepared by Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers, April 23, 2007.

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LandArch/scenic/shpg2.htm>

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- C. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?

☒	☐	☐	☐
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Setting: Refer to the discussion above under item IX A regarding having a substantial effect on a scenic vista.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion above under items IX A. An in-depth analysis would be needed to determine whether the project would degrade the existing visual character or quality

of the site and its surroundings (street corridors, commercial and residential properties) upon project completion. Visual conditions during the project relocation and construction period are not yet determined. Impact significance criteria would need to be specified and defined in an EIR in order to determine visual and/or aesthetic impacts in accordance with each criterion.

Mitigation: No mitigation is identified at this time. The project will require a detailed in-depth analysis to determine potential impacts concerning visual character and/or visual quality of the project site and surroundings.

Sources: Refer to the discussion above under items IX A and IX B.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting: Refer to the discussion above under items IX A and IX B. With respect to lighting, standard City "Cobra" street lights are located along DeLong Avenue to provide nighttime illumination in the project area. Additional cobra lighting is currently located throughout the local street network and within the Civic Center parking area. Decorative street lighting has been provided in the City's downtown area along Grant Avenue as part of downtown redevelopment.

Impacts: It has not been determined to what extent existing street lighting would be altered because of the project, or if new street and/or area lighting would be required under project completion. All potential new sources of glare or light in the area as derived from windows, street lights, building lights vehicles and other potential sources associated with the project that could affect day or night time views will need to be identified through an in-depth analysis in an EIR.

Mitigation: No mitigation is identified at this time. The project will require a detailed in-depth analysis to determine the potential for the project to generate a source of light or glare that could adversely affect day or nighttime views in the project area.

Sources: Refer to the discussion above under items IX A and IX B.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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X. CULTURAL RESOURCES – Would the project:

A. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐
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Setting: The project site consists of three main buildings with multiple additions. The three buildings are addressed at 901, 905, and 911 Sherman Avenue and consist of one church and two residences that were converted to City offices in the 1960s. All of the buildings including their additions are over 50 years old. In the *Historic Resources Evaluation* prepared by Interactive Resources in April 2007, 901 Sherman Avenue was deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and the California Register of

Historical Resources and is therefore a historic resource under CEQA. All three buildings are located in a locally designated Historic (H) Overlay District and have been determined to be contributors to that District per the *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Downtown Historic (H) Overlay District*(2007) prepared by PBS&J. The proposed project would relocate 901 Sherman Avenue approximately 10 feet north of its current location and demolish 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. All three of these buildings are historic resources as defined under CEQA.

Impacts: The project site contains historic resources as defined under CEQA that would be impacted by the proposed project; therefore, the proposed project could have a *potentially significant cultural resources impact* and this issue is to be analyzed in an EIR.

Mitigation: None. This issue is to be analyzed in an EIR.

Sources: PBS&J/EIP site visits, August and September 2007. *Historic Resources Evaluation*, Interactive Resources, April 27, 2007. *Assessment of Potential Historic Context: Novato Downtown Historic District*, PBS&J, November 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
B. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting: The project site is completely built out with buildings and surface parking with small amounts of landscaping. The hills and valleys of Novato were once the hunting ground of Miwok Indians and an Indian village was sited to the north. The settlement of the area by non-Native peoples began in 1839 with the granting of Rancho de Novato to Fernando Feliz. Archaeological investigations performed for the Department of Transportation by the Archaeological Research Center (ARC) along Highway 101 from the State Highway 37/U.S. 101 interchange in Novato north to Old Redwood Highway in Petaluma revealed “a complex occupational history that spans perhaps 8000 years or more, with significant activity from the Lower Archaic period (ca. 5000 B.C.) into historic times.”²¹ The ARC report inventoried and evaluated ten archaeological sites, five of which were determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The records search performed by the Northwest Information Center (NWIC) in August 2007 revealed that there were no recorded Native American archaeological resources and one recorded historic-period cultural resource within the study area which included the entire Historic (H) Overlay District plus one-quarter mile distance. The historic-period cultural resource, the Pini Feed Mill complex is not within the Civic Center boundary. Municipal Code 4-7 provides procedures for preserving and studying cultural resources. However, due to the high sensitivity of the area the NWIC made recommendations for further study that have been incorporated into the mitigation measures below.

Impacts: The project site could contain subsurface archaeologic/historic resources. Site construction through excavation and grading activities could cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource if present.

Mitigation: None. This issue is to be analyzed in an EIR.

Sources: City of Novato Parks, Recreation & Community Services Department, Novato History Museum website *Early Novato Area History*, accessed May 1, 2007. NWIC Records Search, August 2007. PBS&J, *Archaeological Investigations Memo*, November 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting: Paleontological resources (fossils) are the remains or traces of prehistoric animals and plants. Fossils are important scientific and educational resources because of their use in documenting the presence and evolutionary history of particular groups of extinct organisms, reconstructing the environments in which these organisms lived, and determining the relative ages and geologic processes of the strata (sediment or rock layers) in which they occur.

Impacts: Although the project area has extremely low potential for surface fossiliferous geological formations that does not preclude the possibility that subsurface paleontological resources occur at great depths below the existing development. Future development of the study area has the potential to unearth undiscovered paleontological resources. If such resources were discovered they could be damaged or destroyed resulting in a significant impact.

Mitigation: None. This issue is to be analyzed in an EIR.

Sources: Jennings, C. W, 1977, Geologic Map of California, 1:750,000, California Division of Mines and Geology, Sacramento.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☒	☐	☐	☐

Setting: The project site is located in the historic downtown Novato area. The site has been built out for over 90 years and there are no known cemeteries on the project site.

Archaeological field surveys in the area have discovered a variety of resources within a few miles of the project site including shell mounds, the ethnographic village of Olompali, middens and an earth mound, all of which are signs of past human activity and occupation making the area sensitive for Native American resources, including human remains.

Impacts: Although no known cemeteries are located on the project site, given the long history of the area, this does not eliminate the possibility that remains could be found on the project site. If remains are disturbed on the site this would result in a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation: None. This issue is to be analyzed in an EIR.

Sources: NWIC Records Search, August 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XI. PUBLIC SERVICES

- A. Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:

Fire protection?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The project site is currently served by, and would continue to be served by, the Novato Fire Protection District. Primary fire protection services for the project site would be provided by Fire Station No. 1, located at 7025 Redwood Boulevard. Fire Station No. 1 is the main fire station for the City. The average emergency response time to the project site is about two to two and one-half minutes. This response time is considered adequate by the Fire Protection District. The Novato Fire Protection District has met and exceeded its performance objectives during 2007.

Impacts: The project site at the Civic Center has in the past been used for City civic purposes and would continue to be used by City officials, employees and the public for civic purposes with project completion. The project would not lead to an expansion of prior civic uses at the Civic Center. Accordingly, the project would not require the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives respecting Fire protection.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Personal Communications with Division Chief Forrest Craig, Novato Fire Protection District, September 13, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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Police protection?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: The project site is currently served by, and would continue to be served by, the Novato Police Department. The Police Department is currently located at 909 Machin Avenue adjacent to the project site. The Novato Police Department staff includes approximately 119 members, including one Chief, three Lieutenants, two Captains, 11 Sergeants, 59 sworn patrol personnel, 22 civilians, one part-time intern and 17 volunteers including three Chaplains.

The proposed project site falls within the Beat 2 Patrol Area. The Beat 2 Patrol Area includes the police station itself, all of "Old Town" Novato, Bahia (the eastern area of

the City) and the Green Avenue and Olive Avenue areas. Beat 2 also covers the Vintage Oaks Shopping Area and the site of the future Whole Foods Shopping Center.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion above under item XI A regarding former and planned use of the Civic Center project site. Since the proposed project would not include any residential uses and would not increase Novato's population, it would not affect the officer-to-resident ratio. The project site is within an area that is currently served by the Police Department, and it would not significantly impact the response time or the level of service offered by the Police Department. According to the Police Department, current patrol resources are adequate, and the proposed project would not cause service levels to drop below current or future levels. Therefore, the project would not require the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives respecting police protection.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Personal Communications with Lieutenant Jim Laveroni, Novato Police Department, September 12, 2007.

The City of Novato Police Department website, <http://www.ci.novato.ca.us/police>, accessed September 12, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Schools?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The Novato Unified School District serves over 7,600 students in kindergarten through high school in nine elementary, three middle and three high schools.

Impacts: Given that the project would not involve the construction of housing that could lead to an increase in population or otherwise generate an increase in pupils, the project would not require the provision of new or physically altered governmental (school) facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: City of Novato Homepage: <http://www.ci.novato.ca.us>, accessed September 10, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Parks?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Novato's sphere of influence contains seven county-maintained open space preserves with more than 2,600 acres of open space, including 1,600 acres surrounding Mt. Burdell in Northern Novato. Within the City of Novato there are twenty-seven parks, including three major City parks. General Plan Public Services and Facilities Element Policy 3, *Community Facilities*, calls for continuing "efforts to provide various community facilities addressing recreational and cultural needs."

Impacts: Refer to the discussion above under item XI A regarding former and planned use of the Civic Center project site. Since the proposed project would not include any residential

uses and would not increase Novato's population, it would not affect the demand for parks and recreation facilities. Therefore, the project would not require the provision of new or physically altered governmental (parks and recreation) facilities, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts. It is noted that use of the 901 Sherman Avenue building would include various programs, activities and events sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department. These programs would include arts and cultural programs featuring readings, dance and musical recitals, film presentations, talent shows and similar functions; classes and enrichment programs for children and adults consisting of children's/adult theater, singing, family health and wellness programs, education and related activities; meetings, workshops and seminars; and community gatherings and special events (indoor and outdoor) featuring local history events and arts and crafts shows. These programs would supplement existing Parks and Recreation programs and would be a beneficial impact.²²

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: City of Novato Homepage: <http://www.ci.novato.ca.us>, accessed September 11, 2007.

Email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Other public facilities?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The proposed project consists of the renovation and restoration of 901 Sherman Avenue for use as a public meeting and community event venue and the provision of a public plaza and civic green space. Refer to the discussion above under item XI A regarding former and planned use of the Civic Center and project site.

Impacts: No other public facilities are identified that could be adversely impacted by the project. The buildings at 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, although formerly used as City of Novato Police Station/Finance Department and Police Station Annex/Code Enforcement offices respectively, were found to be unsuitable for staff occupancy and public use, and are currently vacant. Thus their removal would not adversely impact the operation of City functions which are currently housed and operating at other locations in the City. The project would not require the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities as noted in the discussions above, or the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the citations as note above under item XI Public Services.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

XII. RECREATION

- A. Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion above under item XI, Public Services, and the discussion under the title Parks.

Impacts: Based on the discussion of Parks under item XI above, the project would not increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated. The project would actually allow for augmentation and expansion of programs sponsored by the Novato Parks and Recreation Department as noted above.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.
City of Novato Homepage: <http://www.ci.novato.ca.us>, accessed September 11, 2007.
Email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

- B. Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion above under item XI, Public Services, and the discussion under the title Parks.

Impacts: Based on the discussion of Parks under item XI above, the project would not include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment. The project would allow for the augmentation and expansion of programs sponsored by the Novato Parks and Recreation Department as noted above which would be a beneficial impact.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.
City of Novato Homepage: <http://www.ci.novato.ca.us>, accessed September 11, 2007.
Email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS – Would the project:

- A. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?

☐☐☐☒

Setting: The Novato Sanitary District is responsible for providing wastewater collection, treatment and disposal services for the City of Novato. The District maintains 200 miles of sewer collection system, two wastewater treatment facilities, and one irrigation system for 820 acres of pastureland.

The Novato Sanitary District serves the project site for sanitary sewer needs and sewer lines are extended to the site. The two treatment plants include the Ignacio Treatment Plant and the Novato Treatment Plant. The project is in the service district for the Novato Treatment Plant. The Ignacio Treatment Plant has capacity to treat 2.0 million gallons of effluent per day (mgd) and currently receives 1.5 mgd. This plant will be phased out over the next few years as the District constructs one new central treatment plant. The Novato Treatment Plant has capacity to treat 4.53 mgd and currently receives 3.5 mgd. The combined capacity of both plants is 6.5 mgd which is adequate to accept normal demand. A new Novato Treatment Plant is under construction on the site of the existing Novato Treatment Plant. The new plant will have the capacity to treat 8.0 mgd and is expected to reach full completion in 2009, at which time the existing plant will likely be converted into a pump station.

The District is required to meet water quality standards specified in a permit issued by the California Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Impacts: As indicated above, the existing and planned wastewater treatment facilities are adequate to serve normal demand including the proposed project. The site is currently served by sewer collection facilities. The proposed project would not substantially increase the demand for wastewater collection and treatment in the City. In view of the above, and given that existing collection and treatment facilities are adequate to serve the proposed project, the project would not exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

Novato Sanitary District website, www.novatosan.com, accessed September 12, 2007.

Personal communication with Ed Mann, Wastewater Facility Manager, Novato Sanitary District. September 11, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

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B. Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: The North Marin Water District provides potable water services to the project site. Two water lines currently serve 901 Sherman Avenue for potable water and fire protection services. The project site has in the past been provided with water service.

Refer to the discussion above under item XIII A regarding wastewater treatment.

Impacts: Relocation and renovation of the 901 Sherman Avenue building would require locally reconstructed water and wastewater piping and metering facilities at the project site to serve the building in its relocated position. The project must conform to District Regulation 15, *Mandatory Water Conservation Measures* (described further below) in order to be served with the facilities. Key requirements of Regulation 15 include the use of high efficiency water using appliances as enumerated. In addition, all non-turf landscape areas are to be irrigated with a pressure regulated drip irrigation system. New irrigated turf area for both commercial and institutional development is permitted, provided that an amount equal to 150 percent of the new turf area be removed from existing development and replaced with new non-turf landscaping and irrigation equipment.

Refer also to the discussion above under item XIII A regarding wastewater treatment.

The proposed project would not substantially increase the demand for water over pre-existing conditions. The area between the Sherman Avenue curb line and the buildings at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue contains about 2,700 sq. ft. of maintained turf. The Civic Green is projected to contain 6,300 sq. ft. of turf thus yielding a net increase in turf area for the project of 3,600 sq. ft. Compliance with District Regulation 15 that requires 150 percent of new turf area be removed from existing development would be met under current City plans to remove about 10,890 sq. ft. of existing irrigated lawn area at Miwok Park.²³ The removal of this amount of turf would more than offset the amount of new turf to be installed for the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project.

The project would also use efficient sprinkler heads and avoid day time irrigation.

In addition, the removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would in fact be expected to lessen the overall demand for water which would be a beneficial impact. In view of the above, the project would not require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or the expansion of existing facilities, such as water or wastewater treatment plants, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Personal communication with Ed Mann, Wastewater Facility Manager, Novato Sanitary District. September 11, 2007.

North Marin Water District, letter to City of Novato Community Development Department, July 3, 2007.

Existing turf measurements provided by Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, February 20, 2008.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: See Section IV of this Initial Study, *Hydrology and Water Quality*, regarding stormwater drainage from the project site for site drainage setting information.

Impacts: Overall, with the project fully implemented, there would not be a significant increase in storm water runoff from the project site because there would not be a significant change in impervious surface with completion of the project as explained in Section IV of this Initial Study (items B, C and D). Therefore, the project would not require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Personal communication with Ed Mann, Wastewater Facility Manager, Novato Sanitary District. September 11, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Both potable water and irrigation water are provided to the site by the North Marin Water District. According to the Novato General Plan, the District has sufficient entitlements to serve buildout of the General Plan which would include the improvements at the proposed project site. See also the discussion under item XIII B above.

Impacts: The City referred the project to the North Marin Water District for review and comment. The District did not identify any issues regarding the provision of water and water related services to the project.

As indicated above under Item XIII B, the project must conform to District Regulation 15, *Mandatory Water Conservation Measures* in order to be served with the existing facilities. This includes the use of high efficiency water using appliances including low-flow toilets, motion activated faucets and tankless water heaters. In addition, all non-turf landscape areas are to be irrigated with a pressure regulated drip irrigation system.

The removal of the existing turf around the buildings would partially compensate for the installation of new turf that would include the use of efficient sprinkler heads and avoidance of day time irrigation. The area between the Sherman Avenue curb line and

the buildings at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue contains about 2,700 sq. ft. of maintained turf. The Civic Green is projected to contain 6,300 sq. ft. of turf thus yielding a net increase in turf area for the project of 3,600 sq. ft. Compliance with District Regulation 15 that requires 150 percent of new turf area be removed from existing development would be met under current City plans to remove about 10,890 sq. ft. of existing irrigated lawn area at Miwok Park.²⁴ The removal of this amount of turf would more than offset the amount of new turf to be installed for the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project. The removal of 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue would be expected to further lessen the overall demand for water with the project fully implemented as compared to existing conditions which would be a beneficial impact. Therefore, in view of the above, the project would not substantially increase the demand for water at the project site over pre-existing conditions, would be served under existing water entitlements, and would not lead to the need for new or expanded water entitlements.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

North Marin Water District, letter to City of Novato Community Development Department, July 3, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
E. Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion above under items XIII A and B regarding wastewater.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion above under items XIII A and B regarding wastewater. The wastewater treatment provider which serves the project site would have adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments. Refer to the discussion above under items XIII A and B regarding wastewater.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Personal communication with Ed Mann, Wastewater Facility Manager, Novato Sanitary District. September 11, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
F. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The project site would be served by the Novato Disposal Service (North Bay Corporation). Solid waste would be transported to the Redwood Landfill, a Class III permitted disposal site, located about 3.5 miles north of Novato. Redwood Landfill is Marin County's primary waste collection site. As of 2000, approximately 68 percent of the landfill's capacity remained, with an anticipated closure date of 2039. The project

would generate solid waste, similar to previous uses on the site. This solid waste would be accommodated at the Redwood Landfill.

Impacts: The project would generate solid waste, similar to previous uses on the site. This solid waste would be accommodated at the Redwood Landfill which has adequate capacity remaining as noted above. Therefore the project would be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required. State mandated recycling requirements and programs administered by the Novato Sanitary District would be implemented.

Sources: Waste Management. "Keeping Marin County Clean: Redwood Landfill" website, <http://www.keepingmarinclean.com/>, accessed September 12, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
G. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: At the state level, the management of solid waste is governed by regulations established by the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB), which delegates local permitting, enforcement, and inspection responsibilities to Local Enforcement Agencies. In 1997, some of the regulations adopted by the State Water Quality Control Board pertaining to landfills (Title 23, Chapter 15) were incorporated with CIWMB regulations (Title 14) to form Title 27 of the California Code of Regulations.

In 1989, the State Legislature also adopted the California Integrated Waste Management Act (AB 939). AB 939 requires that each county prepare a new Integrated Waste Management Plan. The Plan was required to include a Source Reduction and Recycling Element prepared by each city within the State by July 1, 1991. Each source reduction element included a schedule providing for source reduction, recycling, or composting of 25 percent of solid waste in the jurisdiction by January 1, 1995, and 50 percent by January 1, 2000. SB 2202 (Senate Environmental Quality Committee 2000) made a number of changes to the municipal solid waste diversion requirements under AB 939. These changes included a revision to the statutory requirement for 50 percent diversion of solid waste to clarify that local governments shall continue to divert 50 percent of all solid waste on and after January 1, 2000. Senate Bill 1374 requires local agencies to adopt an ordinance, not later than September 1, 2005, requiring not less than a 75 percent diversion of construction and demolition waste materials from landfills. Additionally, new legislation signed into law on September 29, 2004 (AB 2176) prohibits local agencies from issuing building permits to a development project unless the development project provides adequate areas for collecting and loading recyclable materials.

Impacts: The proposed project would comply with all federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste, including those wastes that are eligible for disposal in a landfill, those wastes eligible for recycling and those wastes that must be disposed of as hazardous materials (see Also Section XIV of this Initial Study, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials* for additional information). This would occur under oversight of the City and regulating agencies as defined in current law.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Citations as noted in the above discussion.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XIV. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS – Would the project:

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Setting: A number of properties may cause a substance to be considered hazardous, including toxicity, ignitability, corrosivity, or reactivity. A substance is defined as hazardous if it appears on a list of hazardous materials prepared by a federal, State or local regulatory agency, or if it has characteristics defined as hazardous by such agency.

The California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) defines the term “hazardous material” as a substance or combination of substances that, because its quantity, concentration or physical, chemical or infectious characteristics, may either: 1) cause, or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious, irreversible, or incapacitating illness; or 2) pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported or disposed of, or otherwise managed.

A “hazardous waste” is any hazardous material that is abandoned, discarded, or recycled (California Health & Safety Code Section 25124). The same criteria that render a material hazardous make a waste hazardous: toxicity, ignitability, corrosivity or reactivity.

Toxic, ignitable, corrosive, and reactive materials are all subsets of hazardous materials and wastes. For example, if a material is toxic, it is hazardous, but not all hazardous materials are toxic. Specific tests for toxicity, ignitability, corrosivity and reactivity are set forth in Title 22, California Code of Regulations, Sections 66693-66708.

The storage, use, transport, and disposal of hazardous materials is regulated by local, state and federal agencies having jurisdiction over such activities. This includes the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U. S. Department of Transportation, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration, California Department of Transportation, County Department of Public Health and City of Novato Fire Department

Impacts: The proposed project would allow for resuming civic uses within an existing building structure on a portion of the Civic Center site and add a public plaza and civic green space. The proposed project would not include the transport, use or disposal of hazardous materials other than everyday household chemicals, such as cleaning supplies and lawn care products for routine maintenance within the confines of the project property. Given that the proposed project would not involve the use of hazardous materials as defined above, other than locally commercially available cleaning and lawn care products, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Chapter 6.95 of the California Health and Safety Code.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- | | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| B. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? | ☐ | ☐ | ☒ | ☐ |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|

Setting: A number of properties may cause a substance to be considered hazardous as noted above under item XIV A. Hazardous building components are included. For example, structural building components may contain hazardous materials such as asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), and lead. Typically, these materials are present in buildings constructed prior to 1981 and can present a hazard to construction workers during the demolition process. These materials are subject to various regulatory schemes.

- Asbestos: Asbestos is regulated both as a hazardous air pollutant and as a potential worker safety hazard. Bay Area Air Quality Management District and California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration regulations restrict asbestos emissions from demolition and renovation activities, and specify safe work practices to minimize the potential to release asbestos fibers. These regulations prohibit emissions of asbestos from asbestos-related manufacturing, demolition, or construction activities; require medical examinations and monitoring of employees engaged in activities that could disturb asbestos; specify precautions and safe work practices that must be followed to minimize the potential to release asbestos fibers; and require notice be given to federal and local government agencies prior to beginning renovation or demolition that could disturb asbestos. California requires the licensing of contractors who conduct asbestos abatement activities.
- Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs): The California Department of Toxic Substances Control has classified PCBs as a hazardous waste when concentrations exceed 5 parts per million (ppm) in liquids or when a standard extract of a non-liquid exceeds 5 ppm. Electrical transformers and fluorescent light ballasts may contain PCBs, and if so, they are regulated as hazardous waste and must be transported and disposed of as hazardous waste. Ballasts manufactured since 1978, in general, do not contain PCBs and are required to have a label stating that PCBs are not present.
- Lead: California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration standards establish a maximum safe exposure level for types of construction work where lead exposure may occur, including demolition of structures where materials containing lead are present; removal or encapsulation of materials containing lead; and new construction, alteration, repair, and renovation of structures with materials containing lead. Inspection, testing, and removing lead-containing building materials is to be performed by state-certified contractors who are required to comply with applicable health and safety and hazardous materials regulations. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has published guidelines for the evaluation and control of lead-based paint hazards in housing.²⁵ Typically, building materials with lead-based paint attached are not considered hazardous waste unless the paint is chemically or physically removed from the building debris.

- Mercury: Spent fluorescent light tubes, thermostats, and other electrical equipment contain heavy metals that, if disposed of in landfills, can leach into the soil or groundwater. Lighting tubes sometimes contain concentrations of mercury that exceed regulatory thresholds for hazardous waste and, therefore, must be managed in accordance with hazardous waste regulations. Elemental mercury can be found in many electrical switches, including thermostats, and when disposed of, such mercury is considered hazardous waste.

On March 30, 2007 a *Hazardous Building Materials Survey* was conducted for 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. Samples of building materials were collected to evaluate if asbestos, lead-based paint (LBP), and/or other miscellaneous hazardous building materials were found present at the site structures.

Asbestos containing materials were identified at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue in ceiling tiles, joint compound, cloth and rubber flooring and associated mastic, heating duct wrap, siding and wallboard.

Lead-based paint was identified on the exterior walls and foundations, window sills and hand rails at 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue. In addition, lead-based paint was identified on a second floor hallway wall and in a second floor closet at 911 Sherman Avenue.

Other miscellaneous hazardous building materials observed at the site structures include potential PCB-containing light ballasts; potential mercury-containing thermostats, air-conditioning units (901 and 911 Sherman Avenue only); and fluorescent light tubes.

Impacts: As noted above, the *Hazardous Building Materials Survey* that examined the 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings for hazardous materials was commissioned by the City to assist in design and development of the project. The hazardous materials study included a specific series of recommendations that the City is to include in the project prior to demolition and construction activities. Such recommendations were provided to remove the identified hazardous materials prior to demolition and construction work to avoid worker health risks if such materials were to be left in place and disturbed, and avoid the potential creation of a hazard to the public or environment through upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials.

As recommended in the *Hazardous Building Materials Survey*, hazardous materials are to be removed from the 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue buildings prior to demolition and construction. Specific measures to avoid the release of hazardous materials are to be included in contracts for all building demolition and renovation activities, both prior to and during the work. For example, prior to removal or demolition work that could disturb the identified asbestos containing materials (ACMs), a licensed asbestos abatement removal contractor will remove the ACMs in compliance with the most recent applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, standards, and/or codes governing the abatement, transport, and disposal of ACMs. The removal work scope and requirements are to be included in a work plan/specification developed by a California Certified Asbestos Contractor.

Also, the reported ACMs and lead-based and lead-containing paints (LBP/LCPs) at 901 Sherman Avenue are to be incorporated into an Operations and Maintenance (O&M) Plan. This O&M Plan will emphasize that these materials are not to be disturbed during subsequent use and maintenance of the building. Any identified ACMs in damaged

condition are to be promptly repaired or abated. Any LBP/LCPs in a damaged or non-intact condition are to be abated and/or stabilized.

Prior to renovation or demolition work that could disturb the identified LBP/LCPs, a licensed lead abatement removal contractor is to stabilize and/or remove the identified LBP/LCP in compliance with the most recent applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, standards and/or codes governing abatement, transport and disposal of LBP/LCP. All lead waste is to be properly characterized prior to disposal to determine waste classification, packaging, transportation, and disposal requirements.

Prior to demolition or renovation activities, identified potential mercury-containing thermostats/switches, lights, ballasts and air conditioning units will be removed and recycled or disposed of by a licensed contractor according to all applicable federal, state and local regulations. Specific procedures for removal, handling, transport and disposal to avoid the release of hazardous materials will be included in contracts for all building renovation and demolition activities, both prior to and during the work. Asbestos removal work requirements are to be included in a work plan/specification developed by a California Certified Asbestos Contractor. The process for safe asbestos removal will, at a minimum, include the following steps:

- Identification and demarcation of all asbestos containing building materials (ACMs).
- Hand removal of ACMs by workers wearing clean suits and protective breathers.
- Watering of all debris piles such that fugitive dust is not released.
- Placement of debris in an on-site containment area such that water is filtered prior to entering the storm drainage system.
- Disposal of ACMs at a Class I landfill.

All removal and disposal activities are to be in accordance with regulations as required by law under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U. S. Department of Transportation, California Department of Toxic Substances Control, California Division of Occupational Safety and Health Administration, California Department of Transportation, the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (air quality is discussed in section VII of this Initial Study), County Department of Public Health and City of Novato Fire Department.

In view of the above, the project would not create a significant hazard to the public or environment and would have a less than significant impact related to the potential release of hazardous materials.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Ninyo & Moore, Hazardous Building Materials Survey, Former City Hall Structures 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California, March 30, 2007.

Environmental Data Resources, Inc, The EDR Radius Map with GeoCheck®, Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA 94945, Inquiry Number: 2012827.1s, August 23, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
C. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Setting: There are no existing or proposed public schools known to be situated within one-quarter miles of the project site.				
Impacts: The proposed project would not emit hazardous emissions or handle acutely hazardous materials, substances or waste within one quarter mile of an existing or proposed public school (see also the discussion under item XIV A above).				
Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.				
Sources: Novato General Plan Map LU-1. California State Automobile Association, Novato and Vicinity Map, Copyright 2004.				

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
D. Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	☐	☐	☐	☒
Setting: An environmental database review and local regulatory agency consultation was conducted for the project. On August 23, 2007 a search of available environmental records was conducted by Environmental Data Resources, Inc. ²⁶ The record search was conducted for the project site and a one mile radius from the project site, and was designed to meet the search requirements of EPA’s Standards and Practices for all Appropriate Inquiries (40 CFR Part 312), the ASTM Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments (E 1527-05) for the evaluation of environmental risk associated with a land parcel. The purpose of the file review was to identify recognized hazardous materials conditions that may exist within the project site area related to current and past use of the site and adjoining properties. This includes the presence or likely presence of any hazardous substance or petroleum product on the project site under conditions that indicate an existing release, a past release, or a material threat of release into a structure on the property or into the ground, groundwater, or surface water on the property. The record search included: Federal Superfund sites; Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Information System (CERCLIS) sites; the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) sites; Brownfields sites; State and Local Cortese (SLIC) sites; Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUST) sites; and active Underground Storage Tank (UST) sites, et al. The record search found one site located adjacent to the proposed project site. This is the City of Novato Police Department located at 909 Machin Avenue, listed because of its				

underground storage tank used to contain fuel, presumably for patrol cars. This site is listed on:

- UST: the State Water Resource Control Board's Underground Storage Tank (UST) database, which contains registered USTs.
- CA FID: the State Water Resource Control Board Facility Inventory Database containing active and inactive underground storage tank locations.
- HIST UST: Historical UST Registered Database.
- SWEEPS: Statewide Environmental Evaluation and Planning System, underground storage tank listing.

The underground storage tank at the City of Novato Police Department is on record as an Underground Storage Tank, however, it is not leaking according to the EDR record search and therefore does not pose a risk to the proposed project site.

All of the other sites listed in the records search are at a lower elevation than the proposed project site, therefore no impact from underground contamination migration would occur.

According to the Novato General Plan, Novato does not contain any known hazardous materials disposal sites. There are several State Response and Voluntary Cleanup Sites; including the Bel Marin Keys, the Hamilton Army Airfield, the Novato Storage Park and DOD Housing and the Omniglow Corporation. All of these sites are either active cleanup sites, with or without land use restrictions and/or 'no further action' sites. None of these sites would present a hazard to the proposed project since none are in close proximity to the project site, all are at a lower elevation and all are undergoing cleanup.

Impacts: No significant adverse environmental impact is identified because the project would not be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment.²⁷

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Ninyo & Moore, Hazardous Building Materials Survey, Former City Hall Structures 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California, March 30, 2007.

Environmental Data Resources, Inc, The EDR Radius Map with GeoCheck®, Novato City Hall, 901 Sherman Avenue, Novato, CA 94945, Inquiry Number: 2012827.1s, August 23, 2007.

<http://www.envirostor.dtsc.ca.gov>, accessed September 14, 2007.

City of Novato General Plan, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

- E. For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The nearest airport, Gness Field, is located 2.5 miles north-northeast of the project site. Gness Field is the Marin County Airport, staffed and maintained by the County's Public Works Department. The airport consists of 120 acres and is home base to 295 aircraft. The airport adheres to noise abatement procedures that avoid overflight of residential areas south-southeast of the airport. As a result the project site is not in the flight path of Gness Field. The project site is also not within the bounds of the Gness Field Airport Land Use Plan.

Impacts: Given that the project site is not within the Gness Field Airport Land Use Plan or within two miles of Gness Airport, or within the flight path of Gness Field, the project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

County of Marin website, www.co.marin.ca.us, accessed September 13, 2007.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

- F. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: There are no private airstrips within the vicinity of the project site.

Impacts: The proposed project site is not in the vicinity of a private airstrip. As described in item XIV E. above, the nearest airport, Gness Field, is located 2.5 miles north-northeast of the project site. Therefore the project would not result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

County of Marin website, www.co.marin.ca.us, accessed September 13, 2007.

California State Automobile Association, Novato and Vicinity Map, Copyright 2004.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
G. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The City of Novato adopted an Emergency Preparedness Plan in 1991. The purpose of the plan is to ensure that the City will be prepared to respond effectively in the event of an emergency. Part of this Plan involves minimizing damage to publicly owned buildings such as City Hall.

Impacts: The proposed project seeks to restore civic uses within a currently unoccupied Civic Center building. The 901 Sherman Avenue building in its restored condition would thus be available for civic uses in the event of an emergency thereby providing public benefit in furthering the goals of implementing an Emergency Preparedness Plan. Therefore, the project would not impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

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	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
H. Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	☐	☐	☐	☒

Setting: The open chaparral, grassland and forest areas that are at highest risk for wildland fires in Novato include, Wild Horse Valley, parts of Bahia, Ridge Road, and Pacheco Valley. The project site is in a completely urbanized area. The project site is not located within a wildlands area as defined by the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection.²⁸

Impacts: Because the project site is located in an urbanized (developed) area and not located within an area that would be threatened by wildland fires, project implementation would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *City of Novato General Plan*, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996.

<http://www.fire.ca.gov/wildland.php>

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

XV. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES: In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. Would the project:

A. Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: The project site and surrounding properties at the Civic Center are completely developed with structures and paving. The proposed project site is located within the Community Facilities (CF) designation as shown on the Novato General Plan Land Use Map LU1. CF designated land uses include public buildings, schools, recreation and cultural facilities, City offices, and other civic and utility uses as well as privately-owned uses operating in conjunction with public uses. The project site is not in agricultural use. The project site is designated as *Urban and Built up Land* by the California Resources Agency, Department of Conservation, under the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program.

Impacts: The project would continue civic uses on the project site and therefore would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide or Local Importance as shown on maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Site inspections, April 26, 2007, August 23, 2007, September 6, 2007.
ftp://ftp.consrv.ca.gov/pub/dlrp/FMMP/pdf/urban_change/bayarea_84_04_portrait.pdf

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation Less Than Significant Impact No Impact

B. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? ☐ ☐ ☐ ☒

Setting: Refer to the discussion above under item XV A. The project site is not in agricultural use, is not on agriculturally designated land and is not under a Williamson Act Contract to protect agriculturally used land.

Impacts: The project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion above under item XV A.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- C. Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: Refer to the discussions above under items XV A and XV B.

Impacts: Refer to the discussion above under item XV A. The project would not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Refer to the discussion above under item XV A.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVI. MINERAL RESOURCES - Would the project:

☐	☐	☐	☒
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- A. Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?

Setting: According to the California Geological Survey, the project site is in a Mineral Resource Zone (MRZ) designated as MRZ-1: an area where there is adequate information to indicate that no significant mineral deposits are present. The closest Mineral Resource Sector (i.e., an area that has been or is being mined) is Sector D-2, approximately two miles southeast of the project site, where Novato Conglomerate supplied crushed rock for road base, fill and, concrete aggregate.

Impacts: Because there are no known significant mineral deposits at the project site, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and residents of the state.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: Stinson, M.C, M.W. Manson, and J.J. Plappert, Mineral Land Classification: Aggregate Materials in the San Francisco — Monterey Bay Area, Part III: Classification of Aggregate Resource Areas, North San Francisco Bay Production — Consumption Region, California Geological Survey, Special Report 146, Part III, 1983.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- B. Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?

☐	☐	☐	☒
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Setting: As described in Item XVI.A, above, the project site is not in a state Mineral Resource Sector and is in MRZ-1: an area where there is adequate information to indicate that no significant mineral deposits are present. The Marin Countywide Plan and the City of

Novato General Plan use the state's designation of Mineral Resource Sectors and do not add any other locally-important mineral resource recovery sectors.

Impacts: Because there are no known aggregate mineral resources of local importance or delineated in the Marin Countywide Plan or the Novato General Plan respecting the project site, loss of availability of mineral resources would not be expected with implementation of the proposed project.

Mitigation: No mitigation would be required.

Sources: *The Marin Countywide Plan*, adopted by the Marin County Board of Supervisors, January 18, 1994 (Resolution Numbers 94-117, 94-232, 94-264), Environmental Quality Element.

City of Novato General Plan, adopted by the Novato City Council on March 8, 1996 by Resolution Number 21-96, latest revision March 25, 2003 by Resolution Number 33-03.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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XVI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

- A. Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?

☒	☐	☐	☐
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Based on the findings of this Initial Study (Environmental Checklist Form), it was determined that the project would not have the potential to degrade the overall quality of the environment with exception of the subjects of Land Use and Planning, Aesthetics and Cultural Resources. No biological impacts as noted above have been identified for the project as proposed and no mitigation would be required regarding this subject.

Since the 1960s, the approximate two acre Civic Center area bounded by DeLong Avenue, Sherman Avenue, Cain Lane and Machin Avenue has been used for City administrative and civic functions, including public community events and activities. With closure of all the buildings at the Civic Center in 2004 due to the buildings being unfit for daily occupancy, the 901 Sherman Avenue renovation project would represent the reestablishment of City functions and public use at the Civic Center, in essence continuing prior use of the 901 Sherman Avenue site for community functions and events. However, while the project would not eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory, further analysis regarding land use plan conformity, aesthetics, and potential cultural resource impacts as documented in this Initial Study appear warranted (see Item C below).

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- B. Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.)

☒	☐	☐	☐
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As noted above, the project would not have the potential to degrade the overall quality of the environment with exception of the subjects of Land Use and Planning, Aesthetics and Cultural Resources. Therefore, because there would be no adverse environmental impacts regarding all subject areas examined in this Initial Study with the exception of Land Use and Planning, Aesthetics and Cultural Resources, the project would not contribute to potentially cumulative considerable adverse impacts to the exclusion of the subjects of Land Use and Planning, Aesthetics and Cultural Resources.

ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS

Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
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- C. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?

☒	☐	☐	☐
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As indicated in this Initial Study, the project would not have environmental effects which would cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. However as noted in Section I, it has not been determined whether the project as proposed would conform with the standards for development as documented in the Downtown Novato Specific Plan respecting the desired character of the downtown, or if the project would protect areas and structures identified by the community as historically significant elements that contribute to Novato's heritage and identity. Further, it has not been determined whether the project would comply with objectives, goals and policies of the Downtown Novato Redevelopment Plan, the Downtown Novato Specific Plan, the Novato Historic Preservation District and the Novato General Plan.

Therefore, it has not been determined whether the project would comply or conflict with the provisions of any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect and further investigations appear warranted.

Endnotes:

- ¹ Historic Resources Evaluation, City of Novato, April 27, 2007, Interactive Resources, Architects and Engineers. According to the Resources Evaluation study, "The original 1896 building of the former Presbyterian Church of Novato at 901 Sherman Avenue appears eligible for listing in both the California Register of Historical Resources and the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) as an individual property at the local level and possibly at the state level. The property has been found to have significance under criterion C/3 and maintains sufficient integrity to convey its historic significance at the exterior." Page 16.
- ² The second westbound travel lane along DeLong Avenue is planned as part of the Whole Foods project circulation pattern (City File No.10506M; approved by the Novato City Council on January 23, 2006). The Whole Foods project is to be located about one block east of the Civic Center and 901 Sherman Avenue at the north side of DeLong Avenue and Railroad Avenue.
- ³ Historic Resources Evaluation, Op. Cit. "The former Presbyterian manse has been found only to have minor historical significance as an individual structure under criterion C/3 and therefore appears ineligible for individual listing. The manse may be significant as a contributor to a historic district. The building is currently listed as a local historic structure in the City's Historic Preservation District. This district is not designated by the State and has not been evaluated for eligibility in the State or National Registers.: Page 21.
- ⁴ Historic Resources Evaluation, Op. Cit, page 5. No record confirming the construction date of the Morrison House has been confirmed. "The former Morrison residence has been found only to have minor historical significance as an individual structure under criterion C/3 and therefore appears ineligible for individual listing. The residence may be significant as a contributor to a historic district. The building is currently listed as a local historic structure in the City's Historic Preservation District. This district is not designated by the State and has not been evaluated for eligibility in the State or National Registers. Page 24.
- ⁵ The programs and activities slated for 901 Sherman Avenue were formerly conducted in the Community House, the building immediately to the west of 901 Sherman Avenue. As such, the programs and activities as described are not new to the Civic Center. Data presented in this EIR is as provided in an email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.
- ⁶ The programs, activities and events as listed would be available Monday through Thursday until 5:00 PM, Friday until 10:00 PM and weekends until 10:00 PM.
- ⁷ Rosen Goldberg Der & Lewitz, Inc. 11 May 2007. *Novato City Council Chambers – Traffic Noise*.
- ⁸ Ninyo & Moore, Hazardous Building Materials Survey, Former City Hall Structures 901, 905 and 911 Sherman Avenue, Novato, California, March 30, 2007.
- ⁹ Herzog Geotechnical Consulting Engineers, *Report, Geotechnical Investigation, Novato City Hall, Novato, California*, May 10, 2005, Project Number 1579-01-05.
- ¹⁰ Rational Method: Flow in cubic feet per second = runoff coefficient x rainfall intensity x area. Runoff coefficient would decrease from about 0.85 for existing conditions to about 0.72 for post-project conditions of the 0.85-acre project site. Therefore, for a 100-year event, the reduction in flow would equal 0.13 x 4.56 inches per hour x 0.85 acres = 0.5 cfs.
- ¹¹ Existing counts were conducted in September 2007 to establish current baseline conditions.
- ¹² The analysis conservatively assumed that eastbound vehicles turning left onto Sherman Avenue would use Machin Avenue and southbound vehicles turning left onto DeLong Avenue would use Reichert Avenue
- ¹³ For consistency with the Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects) (October 2005), anticipated traffic volumes to be generated by the Whole Food project was added to capture cumulative General Plan build-out conditions.

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- ¹⁴ Data provided by Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, email transmission, February 11, 2008, based on information provided by the City Construction Manager.
- ¹⁵ The analysis conservatively assumed that eastbound vehicles turning left onto Sherman Avenue would use Machin Avenue and southbound vehicles turning left onto DeLong Avenue would use Reichert Avenue
- ¹⁶ Level of service reported at the seven study intersections based on General Plan build out cumulative conditions from the *Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects)* (October 2005).
- ¹⁷ Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects) (October 2005)
- ¹⁸ In Phase I of the CARE program, the BAAQMD developed a preliminary emissions inventory of TAC, compiled demographic and health statistics data, and developed mitigation strategies that benefit communities with significant TAC exposures. The Phase 1 report can be found at http://www.baaqmd.gov/CARE/documents/care_p1_findings_recommendations_v2.pdf.
- ¹⁹ ppm = parts per million
- ²⁰ Several quantitative descriptors have been developed to analyze the adverse effect of community noise on people. cal energy content of the noise, as well as the time of day when the noise occurs. Those that are applicable to this analysis are as follows:
- L_{eq} – The equivalent energy noise level is the average acoustic energy content of noise for a stated period of time. Thus, the L_{eq} of a time-varying noise and that of a steady noise are the same if they deliver the same acoustic energy to the ear during exposure. For evaluating community impacts, this rating scale does not vary, regardless of whether the noise occurs during the day or the night.
 - L_{dn} – The Day-Night Average Noise Level is a 24-hour average L_{eq} with a 10 dBA “penalty” added to noise during the hours of 10:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. to account for noise sensitivity in the nighttime. The logarithmic effect of these additions is that a 60 dBA 24-hour L_{eq} would result in a measurement of 66.4 dBA L_{dn} .
- ²¹ Archaeological Research Center, *Between the Ocean and the Bay: Phase II Investigations at Ten Archaeological Sites along SR-101, Marin and Sonoma Counties, California*, January 2006, Executive Summary page i.
- ²² The programs and activities slated for 901 Sherman Avenue were formerly conducted in the Community House, the building immediately to the west of 901 Sherman Avenue. As such, the programs and activities as described are not new to the Civic Center. Data presented in this Initial Study is as provided in an email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.
- ²³ Source: Bill Johnson, Maintenance Supervisor Parks for the City of Novato, Feb. 20, 2008.
- ²⁴ Source: Bill Johnson, Maintenance Supervisor Parks for the City of Novato, Feb. 20, 2008.
- ²⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Guidelines for the Evaluation and Control of Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Housing*, June 1995, revised 1997.
- ²⁶ The EDR Report is available for review at City of Novato Community Development Department, 75 Rowland Way, Suite 200, Novato, CA 94595.
- ²⁷ Section 65962.5(a)(1) requires that DTSC “shall compile and update as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, a list of all the following: (1) [a]ll hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code (“HSC”).”
- ²⁸ As defined by the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, the Wildland Urban Interface refers to the geographical point where flammable vegetation meets man-made structures. A Wildland Fire is any fire occurring on undeveloped land.

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- ¹⁴ Data provided by Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, email transmission, February 11, 2008, based on information provided by the City Construction Manager.
- ¹⁵ The analysis conservatively assumed that eastbound vehicles turning left onto Sherman Avenue would use Machin Avenue and southbound vehicles turning left onto DeLong Avenue would use Reichert Avenue
- ¹⁶ Level of service reported at the seven study intersections based on General Plan build out cumulative conditions from the *Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects)* (October 2005).
- ¹⁷ Traffic and Parking Assessment for the DeLong Avenue Partnership (Whole Foods – Signature Residential Projects) (October 2005)
- ¹⁸ In Phase I of the CARE program, the BAAQMD developed a preliminary emissions inventory of TAC, compiled demographic and health statistics data, and developed mitigation strategies that benefit communities with significant TAC exposures. The Phase 1 report can be found at http://www.baaqmd.gov/CARE/documents/care_p1_findings_recommendations_v2.pdf.
- ¹⁹ ppm = parts per million
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- L_{eq} – The equivalent energy noise level is the average acoustic energy content of noise for a stated period of time. Thus, the L_{eq} of a time-varying noise and that of a steady noise are the same if they deliver the same acoustic energy to the ear during exposure. For evaluating community impacts, this rating scale does not vary, regardless of whether the noise occurs during the day or the night.
 - L_{dn} – The Day-Night Average Noise Level is a 24-hour average L_{eq} with a 10 dBA “penalty” added to noise during the hours of 10:00 P.M. to 7:00 A.M. to account for noise sensitivity in the nighttime. The logarithmic effect of these additions is that a 60 dBA 24-hour L_{eq} would result in a measurement of 66.4 dBA L_{dn} .
- ²¹ Archaeological Research Center, *Between the Ocean and the Bay: Phase II Investigations at Ten Archaeological Sites along SR-101, Marin and Sonoma Counties, California*, January 2006, Executive Summary page i.
- ²² The programs and activities slated for 901 Sherman Avenue were formerly conducted in the Community House, the building immediately to the west of 901 Sherman Avenue. As such, the programs and activities as described are not new to the Civic Center. Data presented in this Initial Study is as provided in an email to Steve Marshall, Sr. Planner, Novato Community Development Department, from Larry Dito, Novato Parks and Recreation Department, August 20, 2007.
- ²³ Source: Bill Johnson, Maintenance Supervisor Parks for the City of Novato, Feb. 20, 2008.
- ²⁴ Source: Bill Johnson, Maintenance Supervisor Parks for the City of Novato, Feb. 20, 2008.
- ²⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, *Guidelines for the Evaluation and Control of Lead-Based Paint Hazards in Housing*, June 1995, revised 1997.
- ²⁶ The EDR Report is available for review at City of Novato Community Development Department, 75 Rowland Way, Suite 200, Novato, CA 94595.
- ²⁷ Section 65962.5(a)(1) requires that DTSC “shall compile and update as appropriate, but at least annually, and shall submit to the Secretary for Environmental Protection, a list of all the following: (1) [a]ll hazardous waste facilities subject to corrective action pursuant to Section 25187.5 of the Health and Safety Code (“HSC”).”
- ²⁸ As defined by the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, the Wildland Urban Interface refers to the geographical point where flammable vegetation meets man-made structures. A Wildland Fire is any fire occurring on undeveloped land.

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